GLEANINGS

FROM THE

FIELD.

BY

CARL JOSEPH SEGERHAMMAR, B. D.

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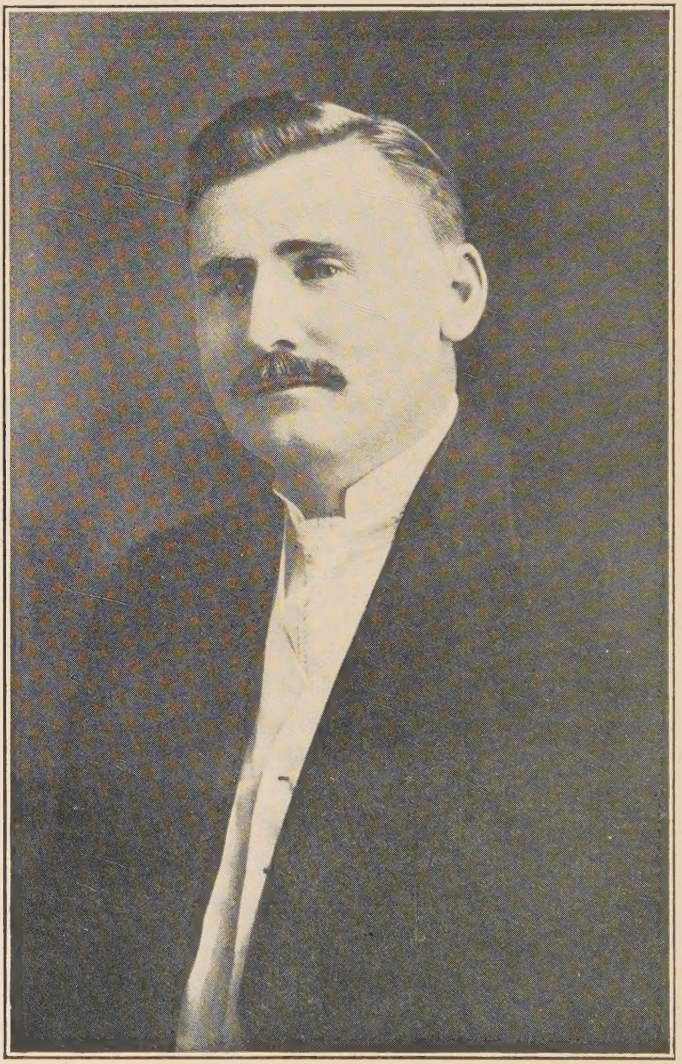
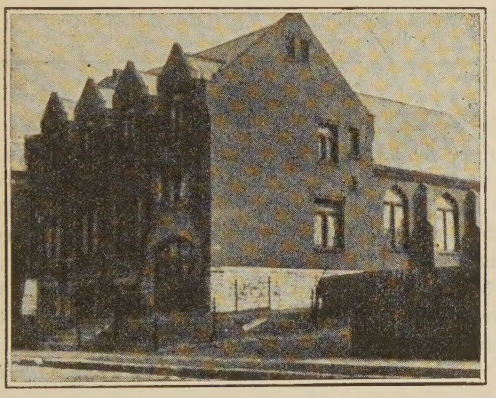


REV. CARL J. SEGERHAMMAR.

Gleanings from the Field.

Sermons, Poems, Addresses, and Short Articles on Topics of the Day.



BY

CARL JOSEPH SEGERHAMMAR, B. D.,

Pastor of the Gethsemane Lutheran Church,

ST. LOUIS, MO.

1912—1917.

DEDICATION.

To my first charge, the Gethsemane Lutheran Church of St. Louis, Mo., in whose service twelve years have now been spent, July, 1905—July, 1917, this book is affectionately dedicated, with the fervent prayer that the congregation may continue to be a "*salt* that has not lost its savor," a "*light* that is not hid under a bushel," but shineth to the glory of God and the consummation of His Kingdom.

THE AUTHOR.

FOREWORD.

This is a peculiar book,—both in its *contents* and in its *object.* It is a peculiar field in which, in this metropolis, the author has spent twelve years of serious labor. His labors, we know, have been a blessing, by the grace of God, not only for his small and struggling congregation, but for himself as well. The book is proof hereof! Pick out any subject you will—of the Sermons, Addresses, Short Articles, Poems, etc.—and you will soon confess that the author is efficient and the reading of his book is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. Wherefore there is no doubt that young clergymen and students, laboring in similar fields and under similar circumstances, will find much advice and exhortation in these pages how to go about a great many things and learn to succeed; and no less will the layman learn and appreciate its admonitions and instructions. The book is *edifying on every page!* Its name, **"Gleanings from the Field"**, is most proper—the contents being a veritable *panorama* of all the different kinds of work, spiritual and social, joyous and sorrowful, great and small, as it occurs in the life of a Lutheran pastor and congregation. And the prime object and purpose of the book is equally noble! Both pastor and congregation, in giving good value in this book to all who buy it, intend nothing less than to apply the proceeds of all sales to the lessening of the burdening debt resting upon their house of worship. Can you refuse? Read,—you will get your money's worth! We have read it with pleasure and great benefit. So will you. And your dollar goes into God's treasury.

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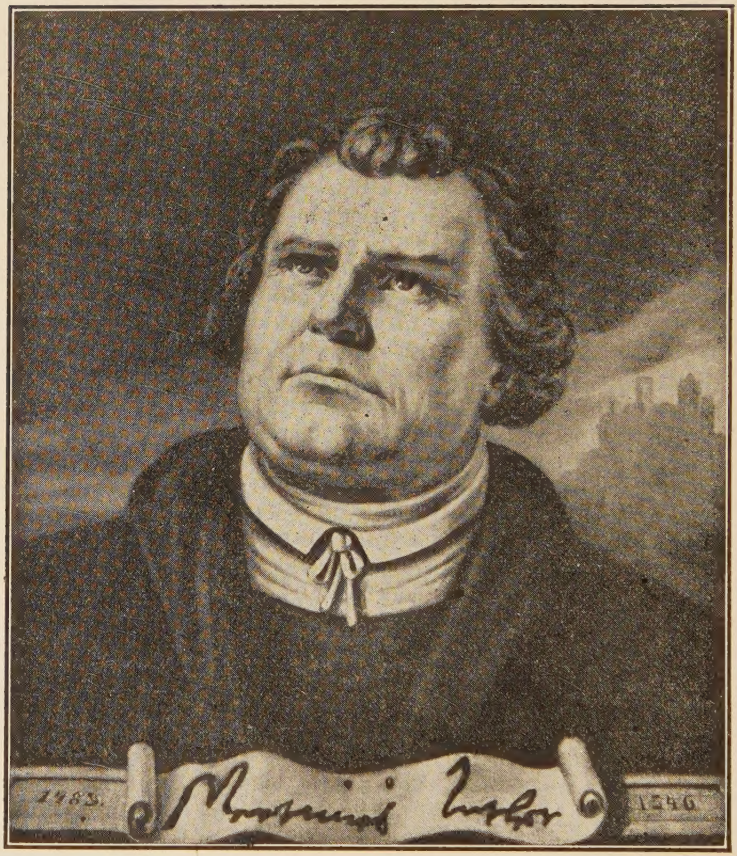

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D. MARTINUS LUTHER.

Photogravure of the famous original painting by Astfalck, Berlin.

PREFACE.

For some time the humble servant who now sends this volume forth amid the public to meet with favor or apathy, perchance something worse, has had dreams, vague and uncertain it is admitted, of the possibility of publishing a book, through which the sparks wrought out at the forge of life and labor on one of our most exacting home mission fields might reach a larger circle than that field itself, kindling perhaps here and there a flame of interest and enthusiasm for that part of our church work, home missions, which, though second to none in importance, yet is often left without adequate support.

In these dreams he has felt the influence of various hopes and impulses. Be it owned that among them was the impulse to perpetuate, to some little extent at least, the memory of these twelve years of labor in this metropolis, and the memory of the humble workman by whom, through the grace of God, those labors were wrought. For we dare say there slumbers in the breast of every human being, the lowliest included, a hope of not being utterly sunk into the sea of oblivion, whose shores are washed by the ever rolling billows of time; of being not entirely forgotten among his fellows who remain, when the moss grows and the grass waves on the mound 'neath which his ashes repose. Aye, the hope would arise of leaving some "footprints on the sands of time," not merely for memory's sake, but also that some brother, whose course might lead him o'er the same or a similar path, might find in those footprints some measure of encouragement.

However, we are well aware of the briery nature of the road along which the writer of books must travel in these days of book-flooded markets. Therefore the above mentioned hopes would likely never have resulted in an undertaking such as this, but for another impulse, which proved the deciding factor. This church, like many others on home mission fields, has for a number of years been struggling under a burden of debt. To lift that burden has been the constant aim and effort of the pastor and the members. Almost every conceivable plan has been tried with more or less result. Many a wearisome day and sleepless night has been spent because of those efforts. Much has been accomplished. Obstacles have been surmounted that seemed insurmountable, and critical periods have been bridged over until the solution of the particular problem was reached. In every emergency we have thus far come out victorious, and can therefore say

with the Lord's servant of old: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Notwithstanding these successes in meeting from time to time our financial obligations, a considerable part of the church debt still remains; and in times like the present, and after all ordinary means and methods have been exhausted, how shall the remaining part of the financial burden be lifted?

While pondering this question one night, as the midnight lamp was burning low and sleep refused to eliminate for the time being our worries, the impulse came which proved the deciding factor in this undertaking. Why not publish a book, the proceeds from the sale of which would cover at least a considerable portion of the church debt? The sale of course must needs be pushed by special effort. Plans for this work at once formed into tangible shape, the details of which it is not necessary here to explain.

At earliest convenience the project was laid before the church board, where it received unanimous approval. We were authorized to proceed at once with the undertaking, and assured of hearty and substantial support. And so it came to pass that we are launching out for weal or woe—may it be the former!

As to the contents of the volume a word or two may not be amiss. We believe the contents do justice to the title of the book: "Gleanings from the Field." That is what they are: Sermons, addresses, poems, and short articles on various topics, all of which have been *gleaned* from the mass of work done on this field during the last few years. With few exceptions they have all been published in our church paper, the "Gethsemane Messenger," and not infrequently that publication is mentioned. This circumstance and the fact that the contents show here and there a local coloring, we hope will not be a matter for criticism, since the object, as the title indicates, is to set forth the activities on, or in connection with, this local field.

Some of the items are in the form of letters sent home to the congregation from other fields, where we were engaged in soliciting funds for the church debt. These letters, descriptive of that work, were published in the current number of the "Messenger." The other shorter articles have all appeared from time to time as editorials in the same publication. The contents have not been arranged in groups according to nature, or subject matter, but are entered promiscuously, in much the same order, as to sequence of time, in which they originally appeared in the "Messenger."

As to the value and the use of these articles, addresses, sermons, etc., we will, of course, let the public judge. They may judge the value inconsiderable. We had presumed to hope that the sermons and addresses might be of some edification and comfort, and that some of the shorter articles might be used to good purpose as "readings" at Luther League meetings and similar occasions. But whatever the verdict, we will in all humility abide by it. And whatever else may be said of the book itself, when the main purpose of its publication (the means whereby to lift the burden of church debt from this struggling, loyal little congregation) is considered, surely no one will, or can, accuse the author of seeking his own glory, or any personal, material interest.

With clear conscience before God and man, and with ardent hopes of the success of the cause, we therefore send this volume forth. Should success wait upon us, we say: "Soli Deo Gloria."

REMARKS.

Since this book is not intended to be a history of the Gethsemane Lutheran Church of St. Louis, or to furnish details as to organization, growth, and development, etc., but is designed to have contents of a somewhat different nature, we refrain from using space for purposes of historical narrative. That would, moreover, be superfluous, since the history of this field has already been written and published elswhere. Anyone who may be interested in looking up those matters, is therefore referred to pages 96—103 of the "History of the Iowa Conference of the Augustana Synod," issued by that organization. Suffice it to say that the congregation now has a membership of nearly two hundred, and a property, including church and parsonage, valued at $22,000, on which property there rests a debt of $7,500.

A further remark might well be added: Since it was imperative to rush the matter of placing the book on the market, in order that we might as early as possible begin to realize the object of its publication, the gradual elimination of the church debt, the time was exceedingly limited for arranging the matter, printing, proof-reading, etc. Therefore, if errors are discovered, as no doubt will be the case, we can only plead that at the best none of us is infallible, and when working under pressure the faults are apt to multiply. We hope, therefore, that the public will give us their kind indulgence, and put a charitable construction upon our shortcomings.

OUR CO-LABORERS.

Twelve years of continuous labor on a field which from its nature and conditions is more than ordinarily difficult and arduous, would be impossible for any pastor, but for two things: 1) The grace of God, and 2) earnest and efficient co-laborers. The first has been abundant, and we return thanks to the Lord of Harvests, the God from whom all blessings flow. As to the second, earnest and efficient co-laborers, we have also been fortunate, and we cannot refrain from adding here a word of appreciation. In so doing, we would wish to mention each individual, but time and space make that impossible. May we, therefore, speak to all collectively. All you, who have borne with us the brunt of battle as soldiers of the cross; who have endured the heat of the day as laborers in the vineyard; who have tarried with us in hours of trials and tribulations within the shadows of "Gethsemane" — accept our grateful acknowledgment. In all the branches of our church work: The Board, the Ladies' Aid, the Luther League, the Sunday School, the Choir, etc., we have had efficient assistance. To all we voice our thanks.

H. NELSON.
Trustee and former treasurer of the Brotherhood. Mr. Nelson could not be present, on account of illness, when the photograph of the Board was taken.

But the members of the Board are those who have naturally, to the greatest degree, shared with us the responsibilities of the work. The Board of Deacons and the Board of Trustees have been the Aaron and the Hur who have upheld our hands while the work was going on. To them we would therefore especially express our appreciation. It gives us pleasure, moreover, through the accompanying half-tone, to introduce them to our readers.

And now we can only add this: May all the pastors of our Synod be as fortunate as your humble author in the matter of co-laborers!

THE CHURCH BOARD.

Top Row, Left to Right: A. Cederquist, J. E. Gerds, A. Cederstrom, Rossio Anderson, C. A. Carlson, A. Eckman, Ernst Anderson.
Bottom Row, Left to Right: John A. Ekland, A. N. Engberg, S. P. Olson, the Pastor, Chas. E. Hallin, Edward Johnson.

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Luther in his Family Circle.

PART I. 1912.

Our Purpose.*

We believe that there should be a purpose in everything that we attempt. To drift along aimlessly, as a leaf that has fallen on the current of some stream below, or has been caught up by the wind and carried no one knows whither, is certainly not to be recommended in us rational beings, who have been created by an omniscient God with a specific purpose, each with a peculiar calling which he is to fill. No; we should "live and do with a purpose." Thence it follows that there must be a purpose, also, with the issuing of this little sheet. Even so. It is not for pleasure or mere pastime. Then the work would not have been attempted. For from some little experience in this line in the past, we know that it is not the pleasant, easy, grateful task it may appear to be. Then, why has the work been assumed? Because we are *convinced* that a *long-felt need* in our church will thereby be *filled.* In a church like ours, being largely an evangelizing church, reaching out, according to the advice and example of the Master, on highways and byways, "into the streets and alleys of the city," *everywhere,* over this vast field, to find and gather in our people under the influence of the Gospel—there is need of a special organ like this, a *"messenger,"* to make known to them the fact that we are here, and the *purpose* for which we are here: their MORAL and SPIRITUAL UPLIFT.

Then there are special features of our work which from time to time call for special mention. Hence, we are convinced that we are filling a long-felt need in sending out every month this little MESSENGER with its message.

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* Refers to the publishing of the "Gethsemane Messenger," the first number of which appeared in January, 1912.

Reflections Upon the Passing of the Old Year.

Another year of our existence here on earth is past. One more stadium on our course toward that inevitable goal, *Eternity,* now lies behind us completed. As mariners on the storm-tossed sea of life, we are straining forward, as it were, to catch, through the mists, some glimpse of the "other shore." Who knows but that for some of us the dim outlines of that shore may *even now* be appearing in the *near distance.* We know not. Our future lies hidden to all save the all-seeing eye and the all-knowing mind of Him who holds our destinies in the hollow of His hand, the almighty God. In view of that solemn fact, that none of us know how near, or how remote, to him is the shore of eternity, may we the more earnestly see to it that we are running our course in the *right direction;* that we are guiding our little bark toward the *right "haven,"* that it may, at the end, no longer storm-tossed, safely anchor in the blessed haven of *everlasting peace and joy!*

"Jesus, still lead on,
Till our rest is won;
Heavenly Leader, still direct us,
Still support, console, protect us,
Till we safely stand
In our Fatherland!"

"Behold, We Go Up to Jerusalem!"

That is the special tidings our little *Messenger* in this issue would bring to you. By the time it is in your hands, we shall have entered again upon a blessed Lenten season, when the closing events of the life of Jesus will be the subject of our meditations, events which play so infinitely great a part in our eternal salvation. Dear reader, are you interested in such scenes? Would you behold Him who was the "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"?

Then let us go up to Jerusalem! Let us in our thoughts be present at the "Feast of the Passover" where, already, the dark shadows begin to crowd in upon Him, as the traitor, Judas, lays his treacherous plots against His

life. Let us follow that "Man of sorrows" on His *via dolorosa* across the dark vale of Kidron on to Gethsemane, where He "treads the winepress *alone,*" where He bears upon His shoulders the burden of a *world of sin.* We stand beneath the cross on Golgatha as the shadows deepen; we look up at the bruised and bleeding form, and hear Him groaning: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!" And the words of the prophet come to us: "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow."

The parched lips move, and we hear the words: "It is finished." The very foundations of the earth tremble; the veil of the temple, and even the rocks, are rent asunder; the tombs are opened, and the dead go forth unto life.—

"It is finished," indeed! The "Rock of Ages" has been cleft for you and me, and in its bosom we find a safe retreat from sin and death, yea, from the powers of hell. We can say triumphantly with the apostle of old: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

"Perseverando Vincit!"

This is an old motto that has stood the test of centuries. "Perseverance conquers." Yes, to keep pace with the progress that is now going on along every line of activity, requires not a little energy. Nothing short of a struggle is necessary if we are to master the many problems before us as individuals, as a community, as a nation, and also as a church of God. It has been so in the past. Kingdoms and empires were reared, often out of a state of chaos. The Church, also, was harassed and rent by schisms within and vicious attacks from without. Yet it stands to-day

firmly resting on its imperishable foundation, the "Rock of Ages," Jesus Christ. But to weather all these storms, both in church and state, there was need of much perseverance. Indeed, from the beginning to the present day, it has been a case of *"Perseverando vincit."*

Even in our church work here we have need of a great amount of this trait. The fruits of our labors are not so readily forthcoming as we would wish. Some people, in their utter blindness to all that pertains to their moral and spiritual welfare, will, in spite of our best efforts to enlighten them, prefer to spend their time, their money, and — *themselves* — in, for instance, "nickelodeons" and other *"five-cent" demoralizing* institutions, rather than take active part in Christian work. So cheaply do they value their souls!

Hence, we have need of much perseverance. But let us not forget that in this case, as well as all others, with the help of God, *"perseverando vincit!"*

"So She Gleaned in the Field until Even."

Book of Ruth 2, 17.

Ruth, the Moabitess, together with her mother-in-law Naomi, was going from the land of Moab to the land of Israel. In passing the fields of Boaz, the wealthy kinsman of Naomi, Ruth got permission to glean ears of corn after the reapers in the harvest field. This was no easy task, to gather grain from a field that had already been harvested. The day was long; the hot sun smote down upon the field with enervating force. Yet Ruth gleaned faithfully until even. Nor were her toilsome efforts without results, for when evening had come what she had gleaned measured one "ephah," *i. e.,* one bushel, according to our measurement. Ruth was consequently happy and thankful.

As Luther Leaguers we should apply the word "gleaner" not only to our paper, but to *ourselves.* The "field" lies before us, and the Master says to us: "My son, my daughter, go work to-day in my vineyard!" It is hard

work, for to a great extent the field has already been harvested; that is, many precious "sheaves" have been carried away by others, the representatives of the world. Still, there are sheaves that may yet be garnered if we use faithfully the time and opportunities at hand.

May we, then, like Ruth, with untiring zeal—for God will renew our strength—continue to faithfully *"glean" the precious souls for the kingdom of God,* and when evening has come, also *we* shall have our "ephah" as the reward of our toil. Yes, "we shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves." — Originally written for the *Luther League Gleaner.*

The Side of the Majority.

"O, I'm with the majority!" How often do we not hear that expression! Every one wants to be on the side of the majority. To take the other side, with the minority, generally requires more courage and determination. It is certainly so in regard to Christian work. The great majority are not interested in *real* Christian work. On the other hand, they revile the minority, the "little flock," who strive to follow their Master and to do His will. Courage is needed, therefore, to stand with the minority and be the object of scorn and ridicule.

But may we never forget that we have on our side Him who is a majority in Himself, the almighty God, and as long as He is with us, there is no fear. "Fear not, thou little flock!" He says. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

We can therefore say as Abraham Lincoln is reported to have said during the troublesome times of the Civil War: "When I know that God is on our side, then I know that we are on the side of the *majority,* even if all the world were on the other side."

So, dear reader, the question in this case is not, "Which is the side of the majority, the *real* majority?" That has been decided long ago, the side of Him to whom

is given all power in heaven and on earth, who once for all has "bruised the serpent's head," and who shall reign until all His enemies will have been laid at His footstool.

The question for you to settle is this, *"On what side shall I take my stand, with Christ and His Church, or with the others?"* God grant that you may do the former! You will then be on the "side of the *majority,*" and the "gates of hell shall not prevail against you."

The Poverty Which Maketh Many Rich.

We sometimes come across passages in the Bible with statements that are anti-thetical and which seem really to contradict one another. One of these is found in 2 Cor. 6, 10: "As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." "How shall we explain this?" "How can such a thing be possible?" you ask. Well, let us look into the matter a little. Let us take our dear Savior as an illustration. Surely, He could be said to be poor during His state of humiliation here on earth! His first days on earth were spent in a *manger,* for there was not room for Him — as it seemed, on account of His poverty — in the inn. Even after having taken up His Messianic calling, this poverty pursued Him. When, for instance, the representatives of the government asked of Him the tribute-money, the common treasury of Jesus and the little group of disciples was found to be empty, so that Peter must needs be sent to procure the necessary coin through a miracle that Jesus wrought. At another instance, Jesus Himself said: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head."

Yes, He was poor, and yet, *did He not make many rich?* Could we have asked the hungering multitude in the wilderness after they had been filled, and the twelve basketfuls had been gathered of pieces left over from five loaves and two fishes; or the frightened disciples on the Sea of Galilee, whose lives had been saved by the stilling

of the tempest; the widow of Nain, whose only son, having been dead, was returned to her living; Lazarus and his sisters after the former had been called forth out of the tomb, — their answer would surely have been in the *affirmative.* Again, the woman taken in sin to whom Jesus said: "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more;" the malefactor on the cross receiving the forgiveness of his sins and the assurance of a place with Christ in Paradise — in short, the multitude of weary and with sin heavy-laden souls, to each of whom Jesus spoke words of *hope,* of *peace,* of *joy,* saying: *"Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee,"* — could we have asked all these, they would surely have answered that Jesus had, in truth, made them *"rich;"* that there are no riches to be compared with those that we receive from Him, "who, though immeasurably rich, was made poor for our sakes."

But how shall we, who are poor, make many rich? By becoming *truly "poor in spirit,"* by realizing that we have, indeed, *nothing in ourselves.* When we have come to that point, realizing that we are poor and helpless, yea, *destitute* in ourselves, then the Lord can *fill our hearts* with *"riches"* that *know no measure,* with *treasures that fade not away,* "that neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." From such a storehouse of *real treasures* we are then enabled, through the grace of God, to *"make many rich."*

Jesus Only.

"And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man save Jesus only." Jesus had taken His three disciples, Peter, James, and John, with Him up on the Mount of Transfiguration, and there He had been glorified in their sight. "His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him." Everything was so inspiring, so glorious. The disciples would gladly have remained there indefinitely, as we can draw from the words

of the impulsive Peter: "Lord, let us make here three tabernacles," etc. But in a moment all the splendor had vanished. Moses and Elias were gone; the conditions of everyday life had returned, "and when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man save Jesus only." But was not that enough? Surely.

This incident from the life of Jesus and the disciples comes to our mind not because we have lately celebrated that day, the "Day of Transfiguration," — that is still many weeks hence, — but because we have had lately in our church a season of more than ordinary significance — the Iowa Conference Convention. May we not say that those days were to us as a season of transfiguration? Who among us did not feel as though he were looking upon life, not as usual, from the vale of toilsome everyday experiences, but from the lofty summit of the Mount of Transfiguration? Did we not see our dear Savior glorified? For in the many beautiful sermons and addresses to which we listened, He was presented to us in all His glory and power, in all His love and mercy. There were also the "servants of God" "talking with Him" and of Him. How beautiful! How inspiring! But, alas, soon was the splendor vanished; the servants of God, whose fellowship we had enjoyed for a time, had gone, "and when we had lifted up our eyes, we saw no man save Jesus only." That, dear reader, is at least our earnest hope and prayer. God grant that it may be said of each and every one of us, now that the convention, that season of refreshing, is over, as it was said of the disciples when the hour of transfiguration was past: "They saw no man save Jesus only." They saw *Him. He* was still with them, their *Comforter,* their *all.* May it be so with us! May His image have been implanted in our hearts, His Spirit in our soul! Then we have need of nothing more, for as Asaph says: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

Annual Convention of the Iowa Conference, April 17th—22d, 1912.

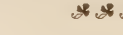
Springtime.

Springtime has come, and as we go out into nature, we receive on every hand evidences of a new life: the flowers and the trees with their sweet fragrance and fresh, exuberant verdure; the balmy breezes about you; the rippling brooklet at your feet; the music of the feathered concert company overhead. All bear testimony, in a language without words, yet none the less forceful, that spring, the happiest season of the year, has come, and with it new life and new hopes.

But there is one thing we must not overlook in these our observations of nature, and that is the *thankfulness* for this new life that goes up from all these creatures of nature, animate and inanimate, to God, their Maker. We can read it in the sweet, blushing petals of the flower, the merry rippling of the brook, the early morning hymn of praise from the birds in the thicket. Again, when the hungry throat of the little nestling is filled by the mouthful of food the mother-bird brings, and the excited chirping at once ceases, and quiet satisfaction takes its place, can we not again see a *thanksgiving* to Him who clothes the lilies of the field, and without whose will no sparrow falls to the earth?

Now, dear reader, there is a lesson to draw from this. You may be a young man or a young woman, and consequently in the springtime of your life. And as you have enjoyed to the fullest extent, during these balmy days, the beauties of nature, you have found your own being throbbing with new life, and you have been thrilled at the thought of that life's possibilities.

But have you stopped to ask yourself whether or not you, like all these creatures of nature, have returned thanks to *your* Maker for the new life, hopes, and possibilities that are yours? "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth!" says David. May that be the lesson that springtime brings to us!



What Will the Harvest Be?

The husbandman, after having labored patiently preparing the soil and sowing the seed, naturally ponders that question, "What will the harvest be?" On our mission field here in St. Louis no small amount of work has been done during all these years, both preparing the "soil" and sowing the "seed." Lately we have also had a special season of sowing, the Iowa Conference Convention. For in the many sermons that were preached and the Bible topics discussed the "good seed," the Word of God, was abundantly sown. We had the precious privilege to listen to all this, to receive in our hearts the seed thus sown. But in what soil did the seed fall? Did it fall "upon the wayside to be plucked up by the fowls"? Or "upon stony places where they had not much earth" and consequently must sooner or later wither? Or "among the thorns," only to be choked by these before the fruit could be brought forth? Or did it fall "in *good soil* to bear fruit an hundredfold"? Dear reader, the question is for you to answer, *What will the harvest be?*

Vacation Thoughts.

The genial month of June has come with all its beauties, all its pleasures. While in full enjoyment thereof, dear friend, do you remember to return thanks to Him who in His great wisdom and for our benefit made the seasons, and of whose love and goodness *this* month is a beautiful expression? For His heart is toward us not cold and chilling, but warm and kindly as the month of June. Then let us thank Him! And as summer comes on with vacation and respite from toil and cares, may we then, also, bring with us, to our places of rest and recreation, a heart thankful to Him who is the Author of both work and rest, and without whose blessings neither would benefit us. After His great work of Creation He Himself rested from His labors, and He has ordained for man also to rest after a period of exacting toil. While thus benefiting by this

divine arrangement, may we think of, and long for, *that sweet rest* which, for the children of God, follows upon a life well spent in useful service to God and man. "There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the children of God," Hebr. 4, 9.

But may we at all times see to it that, a promise of such a rest having been given, we, by neglect of our many opportunities of grace, may not at last fall short of entering into it.

The Outing of the Lookout Committee.

To Forest Park the young folks went
All on a summer's even,
The day in labor had been spent,
The night to pleasure given.
A winsome, happy lot were they,
They came for pleasure and for play.

The boys their prowess for to show
Engaged the girls' attention,
In "hop-skip-jump" and "handspring," too,
They all earned "favored mention."
To Stockholm, no doubt, some will go
Olympic heroes — don't you know.

Now luncheon was the order next,
And all did ample justice,
Without a sign or a pretext
Of deference for their "Custos."
The dainties which the girls had brought
With glutton eagerness were sought.

The luncheon o'er, all to the shore
Repaired in great confusion
To get a boat in which to float, —
Indeed, 'twas no illusion!
For there the lake lay smooth and bland,
To ride upon it — O how grand!

Soon were they launched upon the deep,
And, oh, the joy it yielded!
Their light barks glided at the sweep
Of oars so manly wielded.
With song and mirth the time went by
"Too quickly," heard we some one sigh.

The moon shone down serene and calm
Upon the group delighted;
It acted fairly as a balm
To hearts whose hopes were blighted.
The zephyrs played so gently, too,
Indeed, there was no chance to rue.

But time has fled — "pull for the shore,"
The captain's voice obeying,
"We cannot stay to listen more
To what the waves are saying,
But homeward bound we must be found
Before the *last car* makes its round."

And so the outing forthwith ends,
And likewise this our ditty,
But thanks are due to these our friends
Of the Lookout Committee
For pleasures pure and unalloyed,
By us so richly thus enjoyed.

"Closed."

The above word in big, black, and ominous letters stared the writer in the face the other day when he arrived at the entrance to a down-town office where he had business to transact. He had been busy in his study in an effort to get the items for the MESSENGER ready in due season, and had not noted the flight of time. He hastily snatched up his watch and read from its dial "half past two o'clock." "We will get there in time if we hurry, for they do not close until three." Hat and coat were donned in a minute, and the first car boarded for down town. But upon arriving at the destination, he was only confronted by the uncompromising sign, "Closed." He looked at the watch again, in surprise, and it was ten minutes of four, and he realized that it had really been half past *three* when he read half past *two*.

But that mistake had been discovered *too late;* the trip had been *in vain*.

And yet, perhaps not *all* in vain, for a wholesome lesson had been learned. And the incident had also brought

to mind the similar mistakes that thousands are making in regard to the *more important spiritual things.*

How many there are who seem too busy with material things, the all-engrossing affairs of this life, to note the flight of time, and to realize that the *day of grace* is swiftly passing to its close! At the *eleventh hour* they wake up and bethink themselves of the "important business" of their *soul's salvation.* A rush is made, so to say, for the "gate that *has stood* ajar" so long, waiting for them to enter in. But when they come, alas! the *gate is "closed"!* Like the writer, in the incident mentioned above, they have arrived *too late.* The time of *grace* is *past,* and there is little solace in the discovery that they have miscalculated their time and opportunity, or perhaps, still worse, *knowingly* procrastinated until it was too late. It shall profit them nothing to cry as did the foolish virgins: "Lord, Lord, open to us!" "The door is shut," *irrevocably shut. "Closed"* is the superscription above the entrance to the place they have sought, but sought *too late.*

Dear reader, are *you* making this *fatal mistake?* Then take heed before it is too late! The gate is *yet ajar; now* you may enter in, for *this* is the *accepted time; this* is the *day* of *salvation.*

Our Three "Johns" of American Historical Fame.

We have just celebrated our great national holiday, the Fourth of July, or Independence Day, and a few words anent that subject may not, therefore, be out of place. As a Swedish American people we have reason to feel proud of the part we have taken both in securing and maintaining national liberty. Descendants of the old Vikings, who tolerated no bondage, the Swedish people here, in the "land of their adoption," have always maintained, in a high degree, that same love for, and loyalty to, the ideas of true liberty. They have, therefore, ever been found fighting and working with those who were striving to abolish oppression and unjust servitude.

Consequently, when, in 1776, the Declaration of In-

dependence was being drawn up by the Patriot Fathers who constituted the Continental Congress, we find among them a Swede, "John" Morton, from the state of Pennsylvania, one of the ablest debaters, and, in general, a most zealous champion of the great cause that was at stake.

Having with his decisive vote put his own state on the list of free colonies, he, with the same undaunted patriotism, signed the Declaration of Independence, the adoption of which, on July 4, 1776, marked the birth of a new and independent nation. He also took a leading part in the framing of the Articles of Confederation, which served as the instrument of Government until the adoption of the Constitution, 1789. His death in 1777 ended his illustrious and highly useful career.

That brings to mind another little bit of history to the effect that another of our "Johns" was the *first President* of the United States, during the critical period of Colonial Confederation. He was John Hanson, born of Swedish parents in Charles County, Maryland, 1715. His ancestors came over from Sweden in August, 1642, joining the Swedish Colony on the banks of the Delaware, founded by the Swedish Chancellor, Oxenstiern, in 1638.

Hanson was to a great extent instrumental in bringing about the adoption of the Articles of Confederation, which he signed in behalf of his state. This state had refused to ratify the articles on account of existing conditions relating to the disposal of the land that lay between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi. When this matter, in March, 1781, had been satisfactorily adjusted, Maryland acquiesced, and Hanson signed, *thereby making possible the adoption of the articles, and thereby, also, laying the cornerstone to the foundation upon which the subsequently adopted Constitution of the United States rests.*

In the *Journal of Congress* for November 5, 1781, we read that "John Hanson was on that day elected President of the United States in Congress assembled."

In the various text-books of American history, the beginning of our nation, as such, is generally reckoned from

the adoption of the Constitution in 1789, and George Washington is called the first President. But in the light of the above historical facts, would it not be more correct to date the beginning of the United States, as an independent nation, from the *adoption of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776,* and *consequently to designate John Hanson the first President,* who, as stated above, on November 5, 1781, eight years prior to the inauguration of Washington, was declared elected *"President of the United States in Congress assembled"?*

At a later crucial period in the history of our country, when internal discord on the question of slavery during many years had pitted brother against brother in bitter strife, and when the War of Rebellion had finally broken out, with success for a time smiling upon the side of those who, if ultimately successful, would have caused the disruption of the Union, another Swede equal to the emergency, came to the rescue. It was "John" Ericson, who by his little *Monitor,* on the 8th of March, 1862, not only *saved the day for the Union,* but through that invention *revolutionized naval warfare,* and made the United States, for a time, the *greatest naval power in the world.*

And how about our present-day Swedish Americans? Are they not still found in the ranks, and often at the head, of those who strive for the principles through which this may continue to be "the land of the free" and "the home of the brave," and our Government a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people"? How about the late "John" Johnson of Minnesota? Would he not — had not death so early put an end to his career — have been the *fourth* in the list of Swedish "Johns" who by their life work have given luster to the pages of American history?

And there are others. We find them, these descendants of the Vikings, in state assemblies, in governor's chairs, and in the halls of Congress, as well as in the rank and file of loyal American citizens, *now as ever championing the cause of true liberty.*

And may it thus continue! May we as a people ever be true to those ideas and principles of freedom for which our forefathers, in the old fatherland and in the new, sacrificed their all! "The Bible and the Constitution," may that be the foundation upon which we as an *American* people will continue to build our future destiny! And may we, also, at all times, be on guard against those powers and influences which make for oppression and servitude, knowing that *"eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."*

A Night on Lake Michigan.

"I reckon she'll toss a little bit out there to-night." The speaker was one of a little group standing on the dock of the Goodrich steamship line at Milwaukee. He had reference to a boat, moored to the landing, which was to leave in a half hour for Manistee. The day had been fair, but late in the afternoon lowering clouds had begun to appear along the horizon. An ill-boding wind was even now whistling through the masts, and as we looked out over the lake, we could see the white foam of the waves already whipped into anger. It was with some degree of apprehension that I took in the situation, and strove to realize what lay before me, for I also was to be one of the passengers. But I tried to laugh to myself reassuringly. I had, it was true, never navigated Lake Michigan, but I had tasted the salt waters of the Mexican Gulf, and had ridden the waves of the Atlantic, so what was an inland lake to me!

A few minutes later we were steaming out of the harbor. The passengers gathered in the salon amidships, some of the braver ones settling down in little groups to spend the evening in merrymaking, others with faces expressing not a little anxiety as they listened to the ever increasing moaning of the wind. To the latter class I belonged, for, somehow, the courage I had felt on *terra firma* was now cruelly forsaking me. Not a long time passed until we all began to realize that the situation was serious enough. The

dark clouds had advanced, as it seemed, by great leaps, until they now hung almost directly above us. For a moment there was a lull in the gale, as if to draw its breath before the final concentrated effort. We could hear the deep roar of the brewing tornado — an instant later it bore down upon us in all its fury. The poor boat seemed a helpless toy, now in the depths, and again on the crest of the gigantic waves. It tossed, pitched, and reeled, and at each successive descent into the bottomless pits, we felt as if the earth itself was passing from under us. Between the peels of thunder we could hear the creaking and groaning of the boat, and it sent cold chills chasing one another up our spinal cords.

Suddenly there was an awful crash as from a collision with some enormous body. In a moment all was panic. Children cried, women shrieked, men held their breath. The boat, checked in its course, trembled from sheer inability to go on. At any moment the water might rush in from some breach, sprung by the collision. The suspense was awful! But just then the captain appeared smiling, as he assured us that all was well. It was only a huge wave which, the boat having failed to cleave or surmount it, had struck it squarely.

The elements had now almost spent their force; the rolling of the thunder in the distance indicated that the storm had passed on; the wind was already abating, and the boat moved forward with much more ease.

When the excitement had subsided, and we all realized that we were safe, I sought my room, for it was now late in the evening. As I sank down upon my berth, somewhat exhausted from the nervous strain, but grateful that we had been spared from what might have been a serious tragedy, I remembered the words of the composer:

> **"Rocked in the cradle of the deep,**
> **I lay me down in peace to sleep.**
> **Secure, I rest upon the wave,**
> **For Thou, O Lord, hast power to save."**

Soothed by those words, I soon drifted into happy dreamland.

When I awoke again, the morning sun was shining through the shutters. I hastily repaired to the deck, and lo, there, in the distance, lay the indented, but verdant shore of Michigan. A half hour later, I was walking the streets of Manistee, thankful, indeed, to be once more on solid ground.

* * *

In looking over some old papers containing notes and diaries from the college days, we came across the above. The editor of this little sheet was on his way from the Theological Seminary at Rock Island, Ill., to Cadillac, Mich., where he was to take charge of the church work for the summer (1904). It is a fair description of the trip across Lake Michigan on that occasion, and we give it a place in the columns of the MESSENGER because of the *message,* the *moral,* we believe it contains. Is not our sojourn here on earth to a very great extent like that voyage? Often we hear the rumbling of a storm, and find our vessel beset by angry waves. Lowering clouds close in upon us and threaten to shut out from our view the light by which we are led. Again and again ill-boding winds sweep down in an effort to make us lose our bearings, in which, also, they often would succeed if no stronger hand than our own directed our course. Yes, life is often a stormy voyage.

But there is one who can pilot you safely through, our *Savior, Jesus Christ.* Accept Him as your Pilot, and you are safe. The winds may blow, and the billows roll; the clouds may envelop you in momentary gloom. But with *Him* at the *helm* you are *safe.* for He will say to the wind and the waves again, as He did of old in that dark night on the sea of Galilee, "Peace, be still!"

And when the *"morning"* breaks, you will find yourself safely landed on the "other shore" where no storms do rage, no billows roll, no clouds obscure the light, for *He* is the *Light* and the *Life.*

"The Race that is Set Before Us."

Now that the Olympian games at Stockholm are over, and we have had the pleasure and satisfaction of seeing our old and new fatherland, Sweden and America, neck to neck, shoulder to shoulder, leading the other nations of the world in physical prowess and sturdy manhood, let us direct our thoughts to another contest, another race which is on in the stadium of the spiritual world between the powers of evil and the powers of good, which latter offer to the victor a laurel that does not wither, a prize that fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens.

We refer to the contest of which the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Hebrews says: "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

That race is now on, and you, dear reader, are one of the contestants whether you know it or not. This life is such a contest. The propensities for good and evil in your own heart are striving for the mastery.

Paul uses the illustration of the race-course which was a part of the Olympian games then played every four years on the plains of Olympia, in Elis, Greece, and he draws the parellel between that and life, the strife here in this world for that great prize, the crown of glory.

The difference, however, is this, that in the Olympian race many may run, but only *one* receives the laurel, while in the race for eternal life *all* may win who run well and faithfully the course set before them.

The Olympian heroes are very careful of themselves. They conserve all their powers of mind and body that they may have all the strength and endurance necessary, that no unfavorable influence may sap their vitality or rob them of their courage.

The same is essential in the race for the crown of life. We have need of our every power and energy if we are to win, and only he will endure to the end and finish the race

who conserves those energies of body, mind, and soul. The trouble is, that many do not have the wisdom to do that. "The children of this world are wiser than the children of light." They think they can dissipate their spiritual powers by taking part in all manner of worldliness, and yet be able to win. But, alas, before the race is half run, they shall find themselves deceived; they will soon be lagging behind, and others will capture the prize.

At the Olympian games the friends and relatives of the heroes who are in the fray look on with the greatest interest, and often are in no small degree instrumental in bringing about, for their hero, by their cheers and encouragements, the coveted good results. So in our race for life eternal. It is, indeed, a most pleasing and inspiring thought that there are "friends" who are watching our efforts with the greatest interest, and also lending their influence, through their prayers and intercessions and in other ways unseen by us, to help us reach the goal. For does not the apostle speak of "a great cloud of witnesses by which we are compassed about"?

Think what a happy moment for the victor when those friends crowd about him at the end of a race well run to congratulate, and to crown him with the laurel wreath, the token of victory.

But, oh, what an immeasurably happier moment shall it not be for us when, after all the strife is ended, all the weary running under the noonday sun, and all the heroic struggles against the obstacles that the opposition, the powers of sin and evil, place in our way are o'er, and we shall, at last, stand at the *goal,* and our friends, the near and dear ones who have gone before, with the angels and the hosts of saved souls, shall gather round us to welcome us *home,* and to put in our hands the palm of victory, and on our brow the garland of triumph!

Scriptures tell us that there will be great joy in heaven among the angels and the blessed over one sinner who has been rescued from sin and death, one contender for the prize who has won the contest.

Friend, are *you* a contender for that eternal prize? Will you so run the race that there will be joy in heaven over the outcome? Would that our Swedish people, as well as our brethren here in our adopted fatherland, were as zealous and earnest in their efforts on the spiritual stadium as they were on the Olympian field at Stockholm!

Yes, may we, in the power of Him, whose name is King of Victory, run "the race that is set before us," looking neither to the right nor to the left, forgetting that which is past, pressing on toward that which lies beyond, and the race shall be won, the laurel of victory be ours.

"To the Work! To the Work! We are Servants of God."

While the sun is yet scorchingly hot, making the fields and meadows look brown, causing the mercury in the thermometer to soar, and the spirit and ambition of man to fall, this admonition to *work*, even more zealously than we are doing, may seem to many a little out of season or premature.

But though the weather is uncomfortably, yes, even oppressively warm, just now, we surely have reason to believe that a change for the better will come ere another fortnight has passed.

What we had in mind was this, that the fall season is at hand, and if others, the business man, for instance, in all lines of business, consider the fall the proper time for renewed activities, yes, for putting forth their best efforts, why should it not be so on the field of *Christian endeavor?* It is so. For the Christian worker there should, it is true, at no time be any cessation of activities, except for brief periods necessary to the renewing of one's health and strength. For the forces of evil are always at work, unceasingly, and that fact permits of no waste of time and opportunity on our part. So we should at all times be active in the interests of the Kingdom. But that is not saying that there are not special seasons when we should

put forth special efforts. The fall season is one of these.

Many of us have enjoyed at least a short vacation, and we are now back again with, so we hope, renewed energies, with envigorated minds and bodies. May we, therefore, take up our church work with a new courage and a multiplied zest! May this be our watchword: "To the work! To the work!" — never forgetting that "we are servants of God," and that as such there is much for us yet to accomplish before the day is o'er.

There is, indeed, much work awaiting us between now and the end of the year: choir practice to be resumed; the Luther League Sunday evening devotional meetings; personal mission work among those who may become members of our church or Sunday-school; work, and also a little personal sacrifice, on the part of all of us toward the financial support of the church; and first and last and always, *prayer without ceasing* for the success of our efforts, and *particularly* the *spiritual development* of our congregation.

Yes, there is much work awaiting us, and to all these efforts the Lord of the harvest will give His blessing. "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall also reap, if we faint not." Therefore, friends, we say again: "To the work! To the work! We are servants of God."

The Meshes of Sin.

The other day we had occasion to observe a fly that had been caught in a spider's web. She seemed to repent of her folly in getting into the net, but her repentance came too late; she was helpless, and it was only a question of time when she would succumb and pay the penalty of her folly by her own life. Beside the web, on the wall, sat the spider, gloating over his prey. The more helplessly the fly struggled, the greater seemed his delight. We could not bear to see it, and saying to ourselves, "Thy joy, O spider, shall be short!" with one little stroke we liberated the fly. Did we act rightly? Perhaps you think not.

But we have always deplored the *cowardly methods* by which one, be it man or beast, attacks another; namely, by secretly laying out snares and webs and pitfalls, and then slinking off to a safe distance there to gloat over the misfortune of the poor victim. Moreover, it brought forcibly to our mind the methods employed by the Prince of Evil in his efforts to entrap the soul in the *meshes of sin.* How secretly and subtly he lays his snares! And he sows them so broadcast that it is indeed difficult to avoid them. And then, with what Satanic joy he gloats over his success, when thousands of souls — precious souls, purchased at so great a cost, the blood of the Lamb — fall into them! What are some of those snares? Sin and vice in general. But if you wish us to be more explicit, we will name some of them: The *dance-hall, the dramshop, the picture shows, the secret conclaves of the ungodly.* — Dear friend, are *you* caught in any of those webs? Are the *meshes of sin* closing in upon your soul? If so, your case is sad indeed. And remember, your situation *delights him who has laid the snares;* namely, the devil. He *gloats over your helpless condition,* just as did that spider over the helplessness of the fly.

But listen, friend! *If you will,* you may *yet be rescued.* You may yet be "delivered from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence" that is corrupting your soul. There is *one Friend,* and *only one,* who can help you, your *Lord* and *Savior.* Oh, do not refuse the help that He offers you! Cry unto Him while you yet have the strength, as did David: "Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me; for Thou art my strength!"

Autumn.

The melancholy days are come,
The saddest of the year.

Who among us does not remember those words by William Cullen Bryant, as in the old days of long ago we used to read them from the thumbed and well-worn copy

of McGuffey's Fifth Reader? Those lines have been running in our mind for the past few days, recalled, no doubt, by those forms and phases of nature which now on every hand meet our view, reminding us that autumn has come.

The frosty air of the early morning nips our ears and nose-tips; the noonday sun no longer beams down upon us with rays that are perpendicular, but shows a decided decline in his mighty warmheartedness, sending us with rays that slant a rather cool greeting, causing us to note with more or less regret his inability to make our cheeks glow and the perspiration to stand out like beads upon our foreheads.

The evening winds have a chilling unfriendliness, and by the time that hour has come which is neither to-day nor to-morrow, but betwixt the two, the chance perambulator of the night draws his cloak about him in a vain effort to stay the shivers that shake his frame.

The birds have flown. Ah, where are those dear friends that made the morning gay with music and at night the air melodious with their evening songs? The robin and the wren, the thrush and the meadow lark, where are they? They have taken wing and left us for a warmer clime. The poor whippoorwill alone remains sending out upon the stillness of the night his melancholy cry, answered by the "sigh of the forest," "the murmuring pines and the hemlocks."

The silvery waves that beckoned us from our perch upon the mossy bank have lost their fascination, and seem to voice their resentment of that fact in their angry contest with the breakers. The pretty flowers that blushed at our ardent look have faded away, and the golden grains, lifting their proud heads in the breeze of the summer morn, are long since fallen, fallen before the busy scythe of the reaper. Yes,

> The melancholy days are come,
> The saddest of the year.

And yet, why so designate the golden days of autumn, those fruitful days, speaking so eloquently of remitting

toil, of hopes fulfilled, the wisdom of ripened experience, the blessings that follow upon a life of earnest, faithful labor?

True, autumn speaks to us of decay and death. But in so doing, it also holds out to us the hope of a new life. The grain is laid away into the soil and disappears, but only for a time, only to appear again in due season to gladden us with a new life and the promise of a richer reward.

So we, that part of us which is material, shall be laid away in the bosom of mother earth. In her cold embrace we shall slumber, but only for a time. In due season we shall rise again to a new life, infinitely richer and more perfect — a life, also, that shall know of no decay and death. For the trumpet shall sound, and we shall be raised *incorruptible.* "Having been sown in corruption, we shall be raised in incorruption; sown in weakness, we shall be raised in power."

O the grandeur, therefore, the resplendent beauty of that season which holds out to us such hope, nay, such a certainty!

As a fitting close to this little soliloquy we appropriate the beautiful lines on "The Glory of the Hills" by Clark McAdams in a recent number of the *Post-Dispatch.*

Now are the hills made glorious,
When the sassafras is ruddy red,
Set like a flag victorious
Against the skyline overhead.
The bright wild flowers all are dead,
And the whippoorwill that sweetly trills
Upon the stilly night has fled —
But ah, the glory of the hills!

Beyond the bright reach of the stream
The hills mount bravely to the sky,
With Autumn's handiwork agleam,
And ever beckoning the eye.
The leaves are everywhere afly,
And the sadness of the season fills
The spirit of the passer-by —
But ah, the glory of the hills!

The glory of the hills is fair
Beyond the poet's gift to sing,
The painter's canvas to compare,
Or all the beauties of the Spring.
The fleeing migrants are a-wing,
And the north wind in its coming chills
The cheerless heart of everything —
But ah, the glory of the hills!

And when the time has come when we no longer shall look upon the "glory of the hills" made beautiful by autumn, we shall lift up our eyes unto those *Hills Celestial* "from whence cometh our help," the "Delectable Mountains" of that land, ever glorious, where decay and death leave no trace, but *Spring Eternal* blooms.

There, in the dawn of an *Eternal Day,* we shall see with vision unobscured the glories of our *Heavenly Home,* and shall know even as we are known.

"Nun Danket Alle Gott!"

Thanksgiving Day is at hand, a day set apart for all to thank and praise their God for bounties given and blessings bestowed.

It is indeed a beautiful custom observed by our country to unite thus on a given day in prayer and thanksgiving to Him, who is the "Giver of every good and perfect gift."

Do we have anything to be thankful for on this Thanksgiving Day of 1912? Let us see! Favorable seasons and bountiful harvests all over the country are among the great material blessings we have enjoyed this year. And those blessings are great. For if the natural products of the land, upon which the temporal welfare of us all, even the city folk, so largely depends, fail, our situation becomes at once fraught with hardships. As an example we need only look back upon the years 1893 to 1895, which were years of crop failures throughout the greater portion of the country.

The great mass of working-people in the large cities

are also enjoying favorable conditions. Work at present is plentiful for all who desire to work; no one needs to go idle, and wages are good. Our country as a whole is exceedingly prosperous. Good commercial conditions prevail. No economic crisis, or even unrest, has disturbed the forward march of prosperity — and that notwithstanding the fact that we have this year passed through one of the most complicated, exciting, and uncertain presidential campaigns in the history of our government. That campaign is now ended, and the outcome seems to have been the echo of the *vox populi,* and to meet with almost universal approval.

When we think, also, of the strifes, contentions, and even the bloody carnage of war which have been, and are now, the order of the day among other nations of the world, while peace and quiet have reigned within the borders of our own land, we should indeed be thankful.

The moral awakening and the marked trend toward civic righteousness which we have witnessed during the past year in the political arena, should also not be forgotten. That is a cause for thanksgiving, for, indeed, that awakening had become a *crying necessity* if we were to maintain our position in the front rank of the highly honored and respected nations of the world.

We are still enjoying the religious liberty for the sake of which many of the founders of this nation braved the terrors of the deep and the privations of pioneer life. An open Bible and the privilege of worshiping our God according to the dictates of our own conscience, are spiritual blessings we still enjoy, and which we cannot prize too highly when we consider past history, and even the signs of the times in our present day.

Missionary work is carried on with great zeal, and the light of the Gospel is being shed abroad among millions who before have "walked in darkness and the shadow of death." Even on our home mission fields the work is going forward with great success. Yes, there are certainly reasons for being thankful. Therefore we say: *"Nun danket alle Gott!"*

"Behold Thy King!"

"Behold thy King!" O message of great joy
That comes to us in this blest Advent-tide
With hope and happiness without alloy,
And peace and pardon, and good will beside.
Foretold by prophets in the ages past,
Thou comest, Lord, a godsend from afar.
"All things are ready;" now hath come at last
The dawn of day, the radiant "Morning Star."

"He cometh unto thee;" mankind, take heed!
Long hast thou groaned in bondage day by day,
Wandered in darkness, none at hand to lead
Thy footsteps safely in the narrow way.
But now the darkness disappears, the light shines clear,
Surcease there is of sorrow and of strife;
For He is come — O mankind, do not fear! —
Who was and is "the Way, the Truth, the Life."

He cometh "meekly," without pomp or show,
Without the glitter of this vain, proud world,
Yet as a King, this let the whole world know,
With banner that shall one day be unfurled, —
The emblem of the cross, in whose blest sign,
Emblazoned as of old upon the sky,
All His shall conquer e'en as Constantine,
And live forever though they seem to die.

"Behold thy King!" Yea, as a King He comes
Of all the kings, and Lord of lords, whose reign
Supreme shall be in heav'n and earth. The tombs
Shall ope their gates at His command. In vain
They'll try to set at naught His power *who here*
Their hearts to wisdom never would apply,
But scorned His mercy, seeming not to fear;
Now shall their knees bow down to God on high.

But to the faithful who are oft opprest
By tribulations for their Master's sake,
The coming of their King shall mean sweet rest.
For He shall come to heal th' opprest and make
The captives free, the blind to see, the deaf to hear,
To preach the Gospel to the poor, the lame
As harts to leap; yea, an acceptable new year
Of our dear Lord may we aloud proclaim!

"Behold thy King!" O daughter Zion, shout!
Rejoice, thou daughter of Jerusalem!
Let thy fears cease and bid farewell to doubt,
Salvation, peace, and joy aloud proclaim.
Go forth o'er mountain, vale, and hill, nor stay
The gladsome tidings; let hosannas ring!
Go spread thy palms in homage on the way,
Lift up thine eyes aloft — *"behold thy King!"*

And Now.

Our little MESSENGER has completed his first year. Next month we celebrate the little fellow's birthday. What do you think of him? Has he been a welcome guest in your home? Faithfully he has made his visits every month, and we believe it can be said that his messages have been, in the main, cheerful, that they have been tidings of joy. Or how is it, dear reader? Has he helped you while away a few moments when you were encumbered with the cares of life, and the moments passed with a weary drag? Has he shed, occasionally, a ray of sunshine across your hearth? Has he brought to you gleanings of news from the field where the Lord of harvests is garnering in His sheaves? Has he brought you in closer touch not only with the work of our church, but with the Master Himself?

If so, we are truly delighted; we feel that his calls have not been in vain. True, he has also brought news to you that perchance has pressed from your eyes some tears of sorrow and sadness, and sympathy as well. For it has been his duty to tell of losses sustained from the ranks of our church-members, the reaper whom we call death having plucked a sheaf or two. He has told at times of sorrow and suffering, of trials and tribulations, for it has been his purpose to portray life as it is. But even this may not have been without its blessings to you. Perhaps it has deepened and rounded out more fully your soul-life; brought to your attention the seriousness of life. Then, too, it has reminded you of the sorrow and suffering of Him who in Gethsemane, across the dark vale of Kidron, endured so much for you and me.

We say again, if our little MESSENGER has done any of these things for you, if not all, we are truly thankful, and feel amply compensated for the efforts put forth in making its publication possible. And so we say to our readers, one and all, "Thanks for interest shown in our work! May the Lord, whom we are trying to serve, grant you now a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

Thus our days go by,
Lord, to Thee on high.
We do lift our eyes imploring
Thy sweet mercy, and adoring
Thee for what Thou art.
From us ne'er depart!

Hold us by Thy hand!
And we'll firmly stand
'Gainst the forces that would harm us.
Nothing then can e'er alarm us,
Till we end our days,
See Thee face to face.

PART II. 1913.

The Beautiful Christmas Season

has now come and gone once more. We had all looked forward to it, and hoped that it would bring us much joy and encouragement in our church work, for there is always a special inspiration connected with a proper celebration of Christmas. Our hopes were more than fulfilled. Though we have always had a good attendance at the early morning service, the record this time was broken, there being, according to a conservative estimate, over two hundred present. The festive aspect of the church itself, the beautiful Christmas hymns, the old, old story, ever new, of the birth of the Christ-child, the choir music — all made the occasion one long to be remembered. Every one seemed to have caught at least some of the inspiration the season should bring, and it was therefore a joyful gathering.

The Children's Festival in the evening was also well attended. The Christmas-tree, radiant with electric lights, was beautiful to look upon. The program was well rendered, and one feature that seemed to impress all was the order and reverence that prevailed throughout the evening. This is not always the case at all Christmas festivals. May the inspiration received have lasting results!

The Annual Business Meeting.

It was a pleasure to be present and take part in that meeting. No time was lost, as is sometimes the case at such occasions, in empty words and vain discussions. All had come to transact business and for no other purpose; and they proceeded to do so with a dispatch and also genuine warm-hearted interest in the welfare of the church that was gratifying to see. The reports were also very encouraging. From the various financial reports read, we glean the following: A sum of very nearly $3,000 had been handled by the Treasurer during the year. All obli-

gations to Conference and Synod, as well as those local, had been met, and the church is now on a firmer foundation than at any previous time since the acquiring of our new property. The Ladies' Aid Society had contributed $200.00, and has still $163.91 on hand. The Luther League has contributed $225.00, donated a sum to the "Ericson Fund," paid the delegates' fare to the District Convention, purchased new books and also music for the choir, and has still something left in the treasury. The Sunday-school has turned over $56.00 to the church, contributed to the "Ericson Fund," paid for itself, and has a balance on hand of $20.00.

The following officers were elected: Secretary, J. W. Fischer; Deacons, Edward Johnson and Carl O. Johnson; Trustees, Chas. A. Anderson, Albin Cederstrom, and A. N. Engberg; Delegate to the Conference Convention at Sioux City, Iowa, Albin Cederstrom; alternate, Chas. E. Halline; Sunday-school Superintendent, C. O. Johnson; organists, Esther Johnson and Elvira Norden; Treasurer for the Sunday-school, A. N. Engberg; Secretary for the Sunday-school, Lawrence Nelson; ushers, Clyde Berg, A. C. Fulton, Arthur Engberg, and Carl Swenson.

The English language will be used at all the Sunday evening services. Indications are that 1913 will be a very prosperous year.

"Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep it Holy."

Little Wilhelm Schuessler woke up bright and early one Sunday morning in January. As he looked out through his bedroom window, he beheld a sight that was most pleasing, and that sent his young blood tingling through his veins. During the night the snow had fallen, and a beautiful blanket of spotless white snow covered the ground. But it was not so much these beauties of nature that set every nerve and fiber of his body in motion, for Wilhelm was young, and his sense of the beautiful was therefore not yet so highly developed. But it was something else. He thought of his fine new sled that he had received as Christ-

mas present from Uncle Hans. He had, as yet, scarcely had opportunity of trying it, for the ground had been mostly bare since the holidays. "What fine coasting there would be to-day," he thought. "I'm going out as soon as I've had my breakfast." But his face immediately took on a more serious mien, for he remembered this was the Sabbath, and that Sunday-school at the Messiah Lutheran Church, of which the family were members, would begin at ten o'clock. He did not wish to miss that, for he had determined to set a record for himself and others in faithful attendance. Then, too, he remembered his lesson on the previous Sunday, the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," and how the teacher had explained to the class that the Sabbath is not kept holy by deserting the house of God, the Sunday-school and the services, for the pleasures of life. The question was settled at once. There would be no coasting on his part that day; he would wait till Monday.

But just then he heard voices outside, and found that Johnnie Vosberg and Fred Sanderson and Oscar Carlson, playmates in school, were at the front gate with their sleds, and were calling him to come and join them to go coasting on Bates St., the best coasting place in the neighborhood. They did not attend Sunday-school, at least not regularly, and had no scruples about spending the Sabbath morning in this manner. A lively argument followed. They tried their best to get Wilhelm along, but he held his ground in the argument, quoting to them the commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." The result was that *they* went *coasting*, and *Wilhelm* went to *Sunday-school*. He also stayed for the service, for he thought: "I have been tempted to-day to faithlessness toward my Master, but by His grace I shall be *doubly faithful*."

Church was over, and Wilhelm was sitting at the dinner-table, happy in the thought that he had done what was right, and had pleased both God and his parents, — for they were people who brought their children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Interior of Church.

Again he heard some noise outside, not boisterous, but rather solemn and subdued — the tramp of feet, occasional sobs, and moanings of some one who seemed to be in pain. He looked out and saw the boys returning from their coasting. But, alas! one of them, Johnnie Vosberg, was being carried home on a stretcher. It developed that a competition in speed had arisen among the boys, and in their eagerness to win they had thrown the necessary precautions to the winds, and as a result Johnnie had run into a wagon at the foot of the street and had his right leg broken. It caused him severe pains, and besides, he would be laid up for several weeks. Moreover, the accident could have resulted much more seriously.

Wilhelm was not ridiculed now by the other boys for going to Sunday-school instead of to the coasting place. They were quiet and passed by with downcast eyes.

"Wilhelm," said his father, "are you sorry that you mastered the temptation this morning and went to the *right place?*"

"The throwing away of the counsels of God has a way of punishing itself." That is very forcibly illustrated in this sad accident. "God is not mocked." It is with full earnestness He speaks to us in all of His Word, consequently also in this commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

With Us Abide.

With us abide, O Lord, to Thee we pray!
We need Thy presence every passing day.
Upon our journey to the heavenly land
Be Thou our Guide, and hold us by Thy hand.
With us abide, dear Lord, with us abide;
Cause us ever to feel Thour't by our side.
Gladly we'll wander then,
E'en over moor and fen,
On to the Golden Strand — with us abide.

Behold we go up to Jerusalem,
To see Thy Passion, Lord. Forgive Thou them
Who caused Thy pain, Thy wormwood and Thy gall;
Lord, we do know *that* doth include us *all.*
Therefore to Thee we pray, with us abide!
Though Thou wert justified to turn aside
From sinners such as we;
Yet, in Thy love we see
Pardon both full and free — with us abide.

The "via dolorosa" now we see
Thee tread, O Lord, on to Gethsemane,
O'er Kidron's vale, Thy agony to face;
To bring salvation to a fallen race.
There we abide with Thee in deep distress,
While Thou dost drain the cup of bitterness.
Help us e'er and anon
To say: "*Thy* will be done!"
Will of our own we've none; we *bide* in *Thee.*

The "Man of Sorrows," Lord, indeed Thou art,
With grief acquainted, for *that* set apart;
Our griefs to bear, our sorrows to annul,
The Father sent Thee, being merciful.

For our transgressions, Lord, wounded art Thou,
Bruised for iniquities, Thou dost allow
Thyself to be, that we
Healed by Thy stripes might be,
From chastisement set free; saved are we now.

Though shadows deepened over Golgotha,
A precious light through all the gloom we saw
Shine forth so clear with splendor like the sun;
For — "*It is finished*" — the *great battle won.*
And ever more with Thee, Lord, we'll abide,
Closer and closer to Thy wounded side,
Refuge for weary hearts,
Proof 'gainst the "fiery darts,"
And when our life-thread parts, *with Thee we bide.*

A Tardy Repentance.

For several weeks now we have considered together the precious story of the Passion of our Lord. We have seen Him suffering those unspeakable agonies in Gethsemane; have seen Him bound and led away, mid the taunts and blasphemies of a murderous mob, to the tribunals of Caiphas, the high-priest, and Pilate, the Roman governor, there to be falsely accused and condemned to death. We have seen Him betrayed by one of His disciples, Judas, who valued his Savior at thirty pieces of silver, and then with a kiss, the sign of friendship, the token of love, betrayed Him into the hands of the enemies. Let us make here a reflection or two. Are *we* among those who bear the name of Christ, who with outward signs and tokens *pose* as His disciples, while at heart we are traitors to Him and His cause? Are we valuing our Savior at thirty pieces of silver, i. e., ready to forsake Him for the pleasures of the world, the favor of the world, or for material gain and selfish interests? There are such "Christians". Judas does not stand alone, to our infinite shame and humiliation be it said. May we watch and pray that we fall not into this terrible temptation!

"But we read in the fourth part of the history of the Passion that Judas repented," you say. Yes, but alas, the

repentance came too late. "When he saw that Jesus was condemned"; "that he had betrayed innocent blood" — *then* he repented. He should have considered those things *earlier*. He *knew* that Jesus was innocent before he started out to betray Him. Now when it is too late he repents, and in despair takes his own life. We see here the danger of *dallying* with *sin*. Judas had done so. While being a disciple, he had for some time, if not from the beginning, been false, criticising the cause of his Master, appropriating to himself the common funds, for "he carried the bag, and was a thief, and took what was laid therein." Thus, in many ways he had dallied with sin. We see the consequences. In despair he goes away to his destruction — *temporal* and *eternal* destruction.

We are reminded here of the words of the poet:

> "Sin is a creature of such hideous mien,
> That to be shunned needs only to be seen.
> Yet, seen too oft, familiar with its face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

May we pray the Lord to keep us from dallying with sin, lest in the end we embrace it, and then finally suffer the consequences of *"a tardy repentance."*

Captain Amundsen Banquetted.

A singular honor was conferred upon the Scandinavian people of St. Louis Monday, March 3d, in having as their guest in the city, and particularly at a noonday banquet given at the Mercantile Club, a distinguished countryman in the person of Captain Roald Amundsen; a man who has made an achievement no one made before him, blazing his path across unknown wastes, even to the South Pole. We are reminded of a line or two from a poem by Sam Walter Foss, which lines run thus:

> "There are pioneer souls who blaze their paths
> Where highways never ran."

Those words may well be applied to Captain Amundsen. In his staunch little vessel, the "Fram", he blazed his path across untraversed deeps, and then on sledges pushed

his way over the slippery wastes to his icy goal—a "pioneer soul blazing his paths where highways never ran". When we think of it, that has been the characteristic of the Scandinavian people from times gone by. As early as the year 1000 a company of Norsemen under their chieftain, Lief Ericson, braving the terrors of the deep, blazed their paths where highways never ran, on to a new continent. Some years ago we had the pleasure to travel in the East, visiting among other points of interest Newport, Rhode Island, where, on an eminence overlooking the Atlantic, stands the famous "Round Tower". This tower, as we know, is supposed to have been built by Lief Ericson's men. As we stood there looking at its mossy walls, we thought, "Be that as it may, this story of the tower, it still remains a fact, pretty well established, that the Norsemen discovered this continent 400 years prior to that achievement by the Italian, Columbus.

Again we think of the Norman conquests of the eleventh and twelfth centuries when the Vikings from the north blazed their paths to England and France, largely supplanting in the former country the enervated Anglo-Saxon, and infusing new life into England.

In 1721 another pioneer soul of Scandinavian descent, namely the Norwegian clergyman Hans Egede, blazed his path to Greenland, there as missionary to bring the light of the Gospel to the natives, whom he supposed to be descendants of the Scandinavian people.

Thus we could go on naming other men of Scandinavian birth who as *"pathfinders"* in the lines of science and also statesmanship have "blazed their paths where highways never ran": John Hanson, the first president of the United States during the times of the "Articles of Confederation"; John Morton, the "Pivot" upon whom swung for a moment, as in a balance, the cause of the "Declaration of Independence"; John Ericson, who with his Monitor blazed a path which became the salvation of the Union. And there have been others. All honor to these Scandinavian *"pathfinders"* of past and present times!

About twenty-five attended the banquet to do honor to the distinguished guest. Among them were the three Vice Consuls, Honorables Nelson, Borreson and Ibsen, Messrs. J. Johansen and sons, M. Johansen, D'Ailly, Ericson, Swenson, Liljegren, Rev. Lindebergh, and others whose names we did not learn. The people of our church were represented by Mr. C. O. Johnson and your humble scribe. It was a very pleasant affair, which might have been enhanced, however, by a few appropriate after dinner speeches. This feature of the occasion seemed to have been entirely overlooked. We are indebted to Johansen Bros. and Consuls Borreson and Nelson for the pleasure afforded, they having arrangements in charge. The lecture at the Odeon in the evening was very interesting.

"The Call of the Plains."

Out to the plains where the winds do blow
With a rhythm unhampered and free,
And the sky is blue as the azure you know,
And the air like the blue-colored sea;
My thoughts have wandered so oft to-day,
Impelled by a fancy free.

Why do thy thoughts go wandering there
On those plains so bleak and sear?
Are there no visions to thee more fair,
And subjects to thee more dear?
Friend, dost thou ask? let me tell thee then
In words that are true and sincere.

First, do not say that those plains are bleak,
And the visions they give not fair;
For of beauty unfathomed to me they speak,
And the "Fields Elysian" are there.
The plains of Kansas, of them I sing,
Their beauty, indeed, is rare.

Kansas, thou emblem of freedom and truth,
And of character staunch and strong!
Thy name immortal is made forsooth,
Long since in "saga" and song.
Embellished the pages of history thou hast
By thy deeds of right against wrong.

"Ad Astra per Aspera" thy course has been
As thy motto doth proclaim.
But a nobler struggle has ne'er been seen
Than was waged on the Kansas plain,
For *Truth* and *Justice* and Liberty,
Thou hast reached the heights of true fame.

Therefore no scenes are to me more fair,
And no subjects to me more dear.
No beauty can ever with thine compare,
It shines with a splendor so clear.
Therefore my thoughts with a fancy free
Bring me to thee so near.

Then there are bonds so fond and strong
That bind me to thee, my State,
Bonds of nativity—yes, I belong
To Kansas—propitious fate!
There was the place where I first saw the light
In the days of "seventy-eight".

There was my home, there my cradle has stood,
Rocked by a mother's hand;
There the days of my happy boyhood
Were spent in sunshine so grand.
Can I forget what I owe to thee
Kansas, my Native Land!

There have I roamed in the wood, on the plain,
Have played by the rocks and rills,
Have rejoiced, have labored, have suffered pain;
My heart with yearning it fills
To review in memory the days gone by.
My soul with deep longing thrills.

There the first lessons of life I learned
In the school-house by the hill,
And there from the "*sunflower*" with face upturned
I learned to look *upward* and fill
My heart with *light* and *faith* and *hope.*
That lesson remains with me still.

And now as I sit in my room to-night
With my candle burning low,
My thoughts as with wings do take their flight
To the plains where the winds do blow.
Where the sky is blue, and the sun shines bright,
And the fields with the "sunflowers" glow.

Kansas, the home of a sturdy race,
With character staunch and strong,
With ideals high, for they think it pays
For a people to brook no wrong—
Years have gone by with a rapid pace
Since I dwelt thy people among.

Here in the "urb" of gigantic size
I have lived 'mid its din and strife,
Its lights and shadows, here small the price
At which virtue is bartered, here sin grows rife.
A modern "Sodom" we here do see,
From it I would flee for my life.

The "sky-scrapers" tower with a loftiness
That makes you dizzy to view,
But *men* do not *rise* in *righteousness*
And the paths of evil eschew.
Ne'er skyward they strive with their *heart* and *soul*,
Their treasures corrode with mildew.

Their God is mammon, for silver and gold
They will barter their souls away,
For a "mess of pottage" their birthright they've sold,
What matters it? so they say.
It matters much to whom "*Life*" is dear—
Detain me not, I'll away, away!

Out to the plains where the winds do blow
With a rhythm unhampered and free,
Where the sky is blue as the azure you know,
And the air like the blue-colored sea.
There let me live on the plains that I love,
Till I'm called away, Lord, to dwell with Thee.

February 27, 1913.

And the Floods Came and the Winds Blew.

Matthew 7: 25.

It is with much concern we have read lately in the daily press the accounts of the great devastation and indescribable suffering caused by the elements, the floods and the winds, in several of our sister cities of neighboring states, and we are reminded of the above words spoken by Him, who is the Master o'er the winds and the waves. The

Lord spoke in that parable *two thousand years ago,* desiring to impart to His hearers a most serious and important lesson, and it is our conviction that the *Lord* has spoken *now* in the actualities of floods and storms which have lately brought, not only to those immediately concerned, but through sympathy to all of us, so much suffering and sorrow; and have taken away those things upon which they had built their hopes—*material* things.

When it comes to buildings and other things "made by hands," we must admit that it is pretty hard, nay, impossible, to make them such as can successfully withstand the elements. Last year at this time we had a striking illustration of that fact. The Titanic, that monster of the sea, that masterpiece of human ingenuity and skill, went to the bottom as though it had been a mere toy. And now the same lesson is brought home to us again in the recent storms and floods. Of what avail was all the architectural skill with which the buildings of Omaha and Dayton had been erected, when the storm and the flood bore down upon them? They collapsed like so many structures of straw.

"Therefore, O man, trust not in thine own power and skill, for thou art then only building upon the sand! The floods will come and the winds will blow, and thine house shall fall."

Neither can we trust in the treasures of material wealth that we lay up for ourselves—in a moment they are swept away.

But there is a building "not made by hands" which can and will withstand the elements. And yet with respect to that it depends upon how it is built. We refer to our *Salvation,* our hope of *Eternal Life.* If we rear that structure on our own merits, our good deeds, our excellent morals, our gifts of body and mind, in short, on aught save the *"Rock,"* Jesus Christ, then we are building on *sand,* and our structure will go down before the winds and the waves of the evil powers that be. But if we build on the "Rock," the "Rock of Ages," the winds may blow and the floods may come, yet are we safe, for neither storm nor

flood, nor yet the gates of hell shall prevail against us.— How are *you* building, friend, and where? On the *"Rock,"* or on the *"sand"?*

A Musical Event.

In this issue of the "Messenger" you behold the likeness of the members of the Gethsemane Chorus of 1913,

THE GETHSEMANE CHORUS OF 1913.

Top Row, Left to Right: C. O. Johnson, A. N. Engberg, Martin Ericson, Ed. Brown.
Center Row, Left to Right: O. H. Eastman, Lawrence Nelson, Justine Runberg, Hilma Seastedt, Elvira Norden, S. P. Olson.
Bottom Row, Left to Right: Anna Berg, Myrtle Nelson, C. J. Segerhammar, Esther Johnson, Hilma Samuelson.

and a winsome looking group they are, you will no doubt agree—with the exception of that member who wields the "big stick." As to him, he has long since been acquainted with the fact that "his face is not his fortune." But it was not of the looks of the chorus we were to speak—that speaks for itself—but of their concert given on the evening of Palm Sunday. The cantata "Cross and Crown," which is a high strung and elevating composition, was rendered with a finesse that called forth surprise and then acclaim. Besides the cantata, as an introductory part, several numbers were given: choruses, quartets, solos, male quartets and instrumental music. The verdict of the audience, which we take liberty here to repeat, was that this concert, as to the quality of the numbers and the manner of execution, was far in advance of anything ever given by home talent among the Swedish people of St. Louis. We are grateful for such a verdict, and see in it an assurance of the fulfillment of our hopes that our efforts to enhance among our people the taste for that which is good and beautiful and elevating to the soul have not been vain. We feel assured, also, that a concert of this nature will be an annual occurrence in our church, and that the public will look forward to it as the musical event of the season among our Swedish people of the city.

Spring.

Gone is winter with ice and snow,
And the chilly blasts that forever blow.
We bid farewell to its days so drear,
For spring is here.

Long did we wait for the happy time
When spring would come with a warmer clime,
With scented air and a sky so clear—
Now spring is here.

Our heart rejoices, all nature's glad,
Of all her creatures there's no one sad;
For new life and impulse in all appear,
When spring draws near.

The rivulets leap with a merry bound,
Filling the woods with a joyous sound.
Fettered by "Bôre" they'll be no more,
For winter's o'er.

The fields are speckled with colors bright,
For the flowers are here giving man delight
With their radiant beauty, their fragrance rare—
Spring, thou art fair!

The birds are flitting from bough to bough,
With a merry song—What thinkest thou,
My friend? Hast thou aught of which to sing
In happy spring?

When nature's astir with new life and joy,
Expressing her pleasure without alloy
In language so powerful, you can't refute—
Shall man be mute?

No, let him sing of the blessings given
By nature's God who dwells in heaven!
From whom all blessings forever flow
To us below.

By whose rich grace when our life is o'er,
And we stand at last on the other shore,
The unfolded portals to us will bring
Eternal spring.

"What Meaneth This?"

That was the exclamation of great wonder and surprise which came from the lips of those who had witnessed the great miracle on the first Pentecost day, when the apostles, under the power of the Holy Spirit, had so proclaimed "the wonderful works of God" that all "were pricked in their hearts" and no fewer than 3,000 souls were converted to the Christian faith. And so the world exclaims yet to-day, when it beholds the wonders of God. For God is still a God of wonders, of majesty and power. By His word miracles are yet performed. The blind see, the deaf hear, the lepers are cleansed, and those who are dead in transgressions and sins rise to a new life. "What meaneth this?" It means that the Lord has not forsaken

His own, but is still their protection, their comfort and their strength, the Author and Finisher of their faith. It means that the powers of evil, which now seem to be in the ascendency, and which flaunt their seeming success and triumphs in the face of the children of God, have been measured, nay, *broken* long since. They were broken once for all two thousand years ago by the power of the cross, and that triumph was confirmed by the miracle of Pentecost. "What meaneth this?" It means that the powers and principalities of evil, against which the Christian now has to contend, shall be brought low, and the day yet dawn when this world shall have become "the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ."

Synodical Convention.

The editor's sanctum, from which the messages of the "Messenger" are sent out, is this time located in the "Windy City." If therefore our notes should happen to be somewhat *"inflated,"* you will know the reason why. It is evidently not without reason that Chicago has received the above mentioned appellation, for it is at once noticeable that there is considerable *"atmosphere"* here, not only in form of breezes from the lake, but also in the language of its citizens as they tell you of the *great advantages* which are to be found here and which, they will assure you, are sought in vain in all other parts of the globe. You accept their assertions with a grain of salt, putting a "charitable construction" upon their words, realizing that you are in the *"Windy City."*

What brought us here was the annual convention of the Augustana Synod, to which we have the honor of being a delegate from the Burlington District. This is the fifty-third annual meeting of our Synod, it having been organized in 1860. It is indeed gratifying to note the wonderful growth our Church has enjoyed during the first half century of its work here in this country. Its total membership is nearly 300,000. Only here in the city of Chicago and suburbs we

have no fewer than forty congregations. But that is not to be wondered at when you realize that Chicago has almost as many Swedes as Stockholm, there being upwards of 200,000 here.

As these lines are written we have just finished the sessions of the Ministerium, having examined twenty-nine candidates who have applied for ordination. We have also had the opening service of the *Convention Proper.* To say that it was impressive is scarcely doing it justice. With a Grand Processional by the choir, fifty members strong, as an introduction, the beautiful liturgy, a powerful sermon by the Vice-president, Dr. Brandelle of Denver, Colo., address of welcome by the local pastor, two well rendered numbers by the choir, etc., it was indeed a most beautiful and impressive service. An appropriate opening for the fifty-third annual convention of the Augustana Synod. May the meeting continue with the same spirit prevailing, and may the Lord of harvests richly bless, not only the work of this convention, but all the work of the Synod on its different, widely separated fields, even St. Louis, to the glory of His name and the eternal welfare of many souls!

"A Religious Emancipation Proclamation."

The introduction into church work of various innovations of a more or less worldly nature as a means by which to popularize the church and draw the people, is nothing new. That method has been tried again and again, especially among the non-Lutheran denominations. Socials and suppers, and bazaars and outings, etc., with as many new features as possible added from time to time, have all been tried; and it would not be so bad if the line were drawn there. But that is not always the case. In many instances these advocates of a secularized church have stooped even to the giving of dances and euchre parties, and the like. Their efforts have been rewarded by seeing the attendance at church, i. e., at the services, the divine worship, not *increased,* but *decreased;* they have seen the interest in the

church not augmented, but on the other hand growing more and more lax. That is the *inevitable result* of the *"secularized"* church, only some people are too short-sighted to see it. There is nothing to be gained, from *any point of view,* by conforming the church to the world, absolutely nothing. For if the church is to be like the world, what is the use of having the church at all? Why not have, then, only the world? Again, by bringing in the worldly things into the church, we are "sowing the wind," and without fail we shall "reap the whirlwind."

But some people cannot, or perhaps we should say, rather, *will not* see these self-evident facts, and so they are constantly inventing new schemes to popularize the church.

One of the latest movements in that line is the "Religious Vacation Idea" now being agitated in some Reformed circles. The proposition is to close up the church for a period of a month or two during the summer, while the pastor and his flock take a vacation. The idea is that during this vacation they shall completely emancipate themselves from the *"yoke"* of religion, attending no service, forgetting also their personal daily devotions, if they have been in the habit of having such. They shall dismiss from their mind and heart all thought of spiritual things, and—*"simply rough it,"* to use the exact language of the originator of the "Religious Emancipation Idea." *How excellent!* What a *grand stroke* toward making the *church* and the *world one!*

But as one pastor of the Methodist faith, who takes the opposite view, says: "If a *depopulated* church is what you want, you can have it without going to the trouble of advising people to stay away, for they do that anyhow. They take vacations from their religious duties often enough, without being asked, and that, too, whether the weather is exceedingly warm, or extremely cold, or the most delightful. Excuse me," says he, "from the Religious Vacation Idea."

We are glad to note that there are some, at least, of the Reformed brethren who do not "bow their knees to

Baal" in this modern *craze* to popularize the church. As to us Lutherans, we have not yet found it necessary—nor will we ever find it so—to close our church doors, nor to conform to this *"Religious Emancipation Idea."*

The High Water Mark.

This has been a year of floods, the Ohio and the Illinois, the Missouri and the Mississippi all having been at high water mark in the early spring, causing not a little damage by their rampages. But what we had in mind was a high tide of another nature; one that will leave no damages in its wake, but on the other hand, *great blessings.*— Just as the Nile overflows, inundating the surrounding lowlands, causing them to become extremely fertile and productive of great harvests, so that the sacred writer is inspired to say: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days."—The *high water mark,* for the year, of our *Luther League work.* This will be reached August 2d and 3d, on which days the Burlington District Luther League convention will be in session in our church. The local league has worked hard and faithfully this year, as always, and has praiseworthy results to show for its efforts. The convention will make a *Grand Climax.* The bringing of such a convention here is no small undertaking for a league of a small congregation like ours. But what is lacking in numbers, compared with the larger congregations, is made up in ability and enthusiasm, and devotion to the work. Therefore the convention is an assured success, and will be an enduring monument to the Christian work of our young people. The following is a brief outline of the program for the two days:

The boat Quincy, on which the delegation will arrive, lands at four o'clock Saturday afternoon, the second. The delegation will be met at the landing by our Reception Committee and brought directly to the church.

4:30—4:45 Luther League Rally; 4:45—6:00 *Business Session,* with election of officers, reports, etc. 6:00—8:00

P. M. supper at the church. 8:00 P. M. Literary and musical program, with all the Leagues represented taking part.

Sunday, August 3d, 9 A. M., Sunday-school Rally, with address by one of the visiting pastors; 10 A. M., morning service with Holy Communion—Sermons by visiting pastors, also singing by the local choir and by the *Grand Chorus* of a hundred voices. 12—2 P. M., dinner at the church. *Sunday afternoon, no session.*

The delegates will then be given opportunity to rest, or if they like, to go out and see the city with its beautiful homes and parks and its towering "sky-scrapers." 6—8 P. M., supper at the church; 8 P. M., *Grand Concert,* which closes the convention. Of course, *no admission* will be charged to this concert, nor any of the programs. In this concert leading talent from the various Leagues will participate, also the Burlington League Orchestra. This program will be the *"Crest"* of the *"High Water Mark."*

And now we extend to all our people of the city a cordial welcome to attend all the sessions of the convention, and to our *visiting friends, the delegates, we do most heartily extend our glad hand of welcome and of Christian fellowship.*

Sunrise on the Mississippi.

At sunrise on the Mississippi we believe our readers will agree is no ill chosen time nor place to begin the penning of the lines that will constitute the August issue of the "Messenger." The only thing that might cause apprehensions in the minds of some is the fact that it is the *"thirteenth."* With us, however, that is no scruple. Having submitted once, some years ago, against the objections of our surgeon to a very serious operation on *"Friday,"* the *"thirteenth,"* which operation resulted very successfully, we make bold to attempt the publication of our paper on the same date, nothing daunted by the old superstition. For we hold that to those who "abide under the shadow of the Almighty" there is no unlucky date; every day is a day of grace, abounding in blessings great and manifold.

As we look out upon the river, lying calm and placid in this early morning hour, winding its way now through the low-lying lands of Illinois on the one side and Missouri on the other, and again betwixt wooded bluffs, rising almost perpendicular from its surface, we cannot but draw a parallel between its course and the course of human life. As a stream our life runs along, at times through the lowlands of disappointments and trying circumstances, and again past those interesting heights of renewed ambition and awakened hope and faith, which ever turn our vision upwards toward the "everlasting hills from whence cometh our help." Now our course is smooth and peaceful, even as the Grand Old Mississippi at this sunrise hour, and again we find it ruffled and turbulent, rendered so by the ill winds of vicissitude that blow. Yet, as we said above, what matters it so long as we "abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Every day is then a day of grace, whether its course be rough or smooth.—Our steamer has just made its landing at Clarksville, Mo., at which place we learn from the St. Louis morning papers of the storm that passed over a part of that city last evening. A confirmation of what we have here said: one day calm and peaceful, the next stormy and fraught with dangers. But when the danger seems at its height, the voice of the Master is heard above the storm, as it was centuries ago: "Peace, be still!"

Of the beautiful scenery along the way, the more or less interesting stopping places, the droll little incidents that help pass the time away on a journey like this, we shall not speak, as space will not permit. Some of our readers may wonder why we have shaken the St. Louis dust off our feet and departed for parts further north; for what reason, having the calling of a *"Sky Pilot"*, we have taken to piloting along the Mississippi. In this materialistic age a pastor is often expected to do things which may be said to be quite outside the pale of his calling, even to the piloting of the "church ship" through the breakers of financial difficulties. Upon such a mission the writer is now bent. May success crown our efforts!

"The Convention"

of the Burlington District Luther League is now a thing of the past, but is still very vivid in the hearts of us all. We are grateful and happy as we look back upon those days, for they were days of great enjoyment as well as great benefit. Though the number of delegates was smaller than we had expected, nothing was lacking in spirit, and the unanimous opinion was that this was one of the most success-

The Burlington District Luther League Convention, August 2d 3d, 1913.

ful conventions in the history of the district league. The officers elected for the ensuing year are: President, the editor of the "Messenger"; Vice-president, Mr. Carl Anderson of Swedesburg; Secretary, Mr. Arthur Fulton, St. Louis, and Treasurer, Miss Florence Blomberg, Mediapolis. No invitation was extended for next year's convention; possibly it will be held in Keokuk or Burlington.

The programs rendered during the convention were exceptionally good, and the service Sunday forenoon was beautiful and impressive. May now the motto of the convention be realized upon all the young people of the district: "Shew me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths!" And may we never forget in all our successes and triumphs to say with the psalmist: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us give glory, but unto Thy name, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake."

The Parched Plains of Kansas

are at present our field of labor, and from there we would hereby send a greeting to the readers of the "Messenger." Kansas, under ordinary circumstances called the *"Italy of America"* and considered comparable, as to its delightful climate, its fertility, and its native beauty, to the "low-lying-lands of Italy," of which the immortal Virgil has sung, has this summer, through an almost entire absence of rain, been transformed into a barren waste, looking more like the Saharah desert than like the garden spot of the United States. The wind blows a hurricane almost incessantly, stirring up the dust until your eyes, if you venture out, are all but blinded, and your nose and throat are so filled with Kansas soil that you gasp for breath. The beautiful streams are mostly dry; the birds, even, have flown, being driven away by lack of water and the excessive heat.—And here, in such a country, we now have our field of labor, being engaged in the *"pleasant pastime"* of raising funds for our church work. No doubt it will be said: "What folly to go out there under such circumstances!"

Don't you know, dear reader, that there is a great pleasure and satisfaction in overcoming the greatest obstacles; in demonstrating to yourself that you have the "courage of your convictions" to that extent that you can face and overcome hardships? There is enough of the "Viking" left in us to attempt the weathering of the gale, even in Kansas. Not only that, but there is at the same time enough *"faith"* in us, faith in Him who rules our destinies, and who gives to our labors the fruitage, to believe that our work even here, notwithstanding untoward circumstances, will be a success. For, as we said in the last issue, we "abide under the shadow of the Almighty," and then it is quite immaterial whether we are in the Saharah or in the Garden of Eden. We came very nearly not sending in anything for the "Messenger" this time, for the reason that we have been too busy to write. From twelve to fourteen hours labor each day when the mercury has been ranging between 100 and 106 in the shade has made it all but impossible to wield the pen, except to send an occasional greeting home. But how about the work? you ask. Is anything being accomplished? Even so. The least we have received any day (except the days we have traveled from one place to another) is $15.00, and the highest so far is $40.00. From that you can figure out the average. So we are at any rate "earning our *salt.*" Besides our regular work, that of raising funds, we are called upon to do a great many things: preach three or four sermons a week, address aid societies and Luther leagues, be present, and of course speak, at various surprises that the congregations give now their pastor and again their pastor's good wife. That's not all. When staying with brethren who live in the country, we make ourselves useful mornings and evenings by feeding the chickens and milking the cows, and even, as on one occasion, repairing barbwire fences, for it happened that "the sheep were in the meadow, the cows in the corn." All of this, of course, gives variety, and takes away somewhat the weary monotony of our present occupation. At the same time we have the happy con-

science that we have been of some service to both man and beast.

And now, realizing that our letter is quite long enough, we say "au revoir," hoping that all is well among our people in St. Louis, and above all that, even in our absence, that work is prospering, which will make our beloved congregation more and more a part of "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

The Land of Wonders.

We are compelled to use this headline as the keynote of what we this time have to say of the state of Kansas, within which commonwealth we for another fortnight or two will have our field of labor. That the "Sunflower State" is a wonderful state has long since been an established fact. From the days of the "Squatter Sovereignty" up to the present moment, things have happened here which have been only a little short of the marvelous. As to its people, its various institutions, its nature, its natural resources and its possibilities, Kansas stands very nearly in a class by itself.

It is particularly its nature that has greatly impressed us since returning out here a week ago, and we are not alone; there are hundreds of others whose eyes have opened wide in astonishment at the great transformation that has been wrought on these plains and in these valleys in the brief period of three weeks.

On our first invasion of Kansas in the first part of September, we found the state, as we wrote then, a barren waste. Everything in the line of crops, and in fact all vegetation had been burnt up by the drouth and the hot winds. The streams and springs were dry, the trees were barren as in late autumn, and the birds had flown. The only thing that was still flying, after the birds had all flown, was the *Kansas soil.* That was certainly astir. It was in evidence everywhere: beneath you, around you and above you. You were almost constantly enveloped in a cloud of dust.—That was *three weeks ago. To-day,* as you

look out upon the plains, the valleys, and the hillsides of Kansas, you do not believe your eyes. You think that you are dreaming, or that you have suddenly, by some unseen power, been transplanted into some beautiful tropical country, yea, into a veritable garden of Eden. The wheat fields, the alfalfa lands, the trees, the hedges, the shrubbery are all clad in a verdure glorious to behold. The meadowlarks are singing. You would believe that spring had just been ushered in, but for the fact that this is October.

We have been kept exceedingly busy since coming out here. In a little less than a week we have traveled 125 miles by team and made 133 calls, in as many homes, in the interest of the work in which we are at present engaged. Have also preached three sermons and given three other addresses. "But how about the contributions?" you ask. "Has anything been coming into our coffers in the meantime?" Not as abundantly as in the days when "indulgence money" flowed into the coffers of a John Tetzel. But we have nevertheless received a few mites to the aggregate sum of $118.00. The result might have been worse for less than one week's work in a country where the drouth has destroyed the season's crops. So we are not despairing; we have a little good cheer in reserve yet, for rainy days that might come.

The people with whom we have made our headquarters have also been very kind and hospitable. Thus, we had the great pleasure to stay two days with our good friend and school-mate, the Rev. A. Andre of Assaria; and in his comfortable home and in the midst of his estimable family, the evenings were so delightfully spent that the monotony of the day's work was more than offset. Also with the Rev. Gustav Ericson of Salemsburg, the author and poet, we spent an evening or two in pleasant communion. J. E. Barrington, the Falun pastor, another old friend from the college days, entertained us royally in his elegant parsonage. He was a little at a disadvantage, however, as he was "baching it," his family being at present on a sojourn in Michigan.

It was a pleasure to see the excellent work all these brethren are doing on their respective fields and the high esteem in which they are held by their congregations.

At Marquette we did not stay with the pastor for the simple reason that they have none at present, Rev. Bengtson having lately moved to Kansas City, Mo., to the great regret of the congregation in Marquette. But our stay in that city was none the less made pleasant, for we had the good fortune to be entertained at the R. A. Thompson home. Mr. Thompson is not only one of the leading business men of Marquette, but also a prominent man in the Kansas Conference, holding among other positions of trust a directorship in the Bethany College Board. We are under great obligation to him and his family for the comfort enjoyed in their lovely home.

Other leading business men of Marquette whom we had the pleasure to meet and who gave us a "boost" in our subscription work, were: F. E. Hawkinson, the banker; Alof Olson, the furniture man; C. J. Nordstrom, the postmaster; Ellvin, the druggist; Wm. Westling, Ernst Johnson, and others. They all seemed to have the spirit which goes to make an enterprising town, and such a place is Marquette.

Our next stopping place will be New Gottland, Kans., where we will meet Dr. G. A. Dorf, whom we had the pleasure to hear at one of our services in St. Louis some weeks ago.

Our notes from the "firing line" out here in Kansas are now, no doubt, lengthy enough. And so we will close, voicing again our sincere thanks to all the good people who have helped us in our work, and wishing also God's speed in the work on the home field in the "Mound City."

Marquette, Kans., October 7, 1913.

The Luther League Pledges.

In one of our issues last summer, we mentioned that the members of the League had undertaken something by

which a great deal could be accomplished in a financial way. We referred to the above mentioned pledges. At the June meeting the members pledged themselves to give each $1.00 per month for six months. The money, thus raised, was to be used for defraying the expenses of the District Luther League Convention.

The plan has materialized so nicely that not only were all the expenses of the convention (which were quite considerable) paid, but besides that the League has purchased new carpets for the aisles and the vestibule of the church, for a sum of $55.00, bought books for the library, and contributed $50.00 to other church purposes. There are few leagues of the size and resources of ours that can show a record like that for so short a period.

All honors to our active Luther Leaguers!

Blest Christmastide.

Blest Christmastide! again thou'rt here
With blessings for us all,
With joy and gladness and good cheer
Thou com'st to great and small.
Of all the seasons of the year
That make our hearts rejoice,
Thou art, indeed, to us most dear,
On thee we fix our choice.

The air is crisp, the crystal snow
Lies glittering in the sun,
The boys and girls a-coasting go
When lessons all are done.
Around the hearthstone's sparkling fire,
When evening hours have come,
We gather and we tune our lyre,
For "there's no place like home."

"No place like home," 'tis truly said,
And when we feel that most
Is at the happy Christmas time;
Indeed, we would feel lost,
If in the world we had to roam
As Christmas draweth nigh,
Without a hearth, without a home—
The thought evokes a sigh.

May we then thank our God above
For blessings He has given!
For hearth and home, with peace and love,
The counterpart of heaven.
And may we pray Him to impart
To us, though without merit,
That gift and quality of heart
Known as the *"Christmas Spirit."*

A spirit of good will to all
And malice toward no creature,
But charity and fellowship
The glorious crowning feature.
Then will our days be full of joy,
Through all the Christmas season,
And happiness without alloy,
For there will be good reason.

And so to thee, blest Christmastide,
We sing with hearts aglowing
Our praises, for whate'er betide,
His love is overflowing
Who gave us Christmas that we may,
From out a world benighted,
Shine with a lustre bright as day,
"There," with the saints united.

Our "Messenger"

has now completed its second year. From what we hear among its readers, it has become a very welcome guest in the many homes to which it pays its visits. And those visits are not confined to residents of St. Louis alone, but the paper goes, also, to no fewer than fourteen states of the Union, and to British Columbia and Porto Rico, bringing its messages fresh from the "firing line" of our Swedish Lutheran mission field in this metropolis. It has recorded and related the current history of our little congregation, and that history has, no one can deny, been very interesting; not only to us here who are immediately concerned, but to many others to whom the labors, the struggles, the vicissitudes, and also the joys and triumphs of God's people are interesting facts.

In thus telling the story of our church and its work, the "Messenger" has brought you at times within the shadows of Gethsemane. But it has also, we believe, carried you to the summit of the Mount of Transfiguration, and brought you face to face with the resplendent glory of Him who is the Light of the world. We have journeyed in company through the wilderness, but we have also together stood upon Mt. Pisgah and caught the glimpses, which occasionally come to those *who have eyes to see,* of the Glorious Land that lies beyond. For such are the experiences of God's people: lights and shadows, joys and sorrows, defeats and triumphs. But thanks be to God, the lights and the joys and the triumphs shall alone remain at the end, if we faint not; and they shall remain forever and ever.

PART III. 1914.

The Annual Business Meeting

of the church was held Jan. 8. About the largest number of voting members in its history was present to take part in the deliberations and to help outline the work for the ensuing year. That is a pretty reliable indicator of the interest of the members in the work of their church. When they turn out in such numbers, and take part with the enthusiasm and interest which characterized this meeting, you know that the congregation is awake to its interests and that the future will be well taken care of.

Then, too, it was very encouraging to notice that all had come for the purpose of transacting the business that was before the house, and not to spend long hours wrangling over personalities, as is sometimes the case at such meetings.

The financial reports from the various organizations showed decided gains over the preceding year. Thus the Luther League has had an income of $353.60, which is $82.48 more than the year before. The receipts of the Sunday-school have been $151.39, $44.75 above last year's record. The Ladies' Aid Society has on hand $181.16, and still it has contributed to the church $160.00 during 1913.

Total receipts within the church for the various branches of its extensive work, including local needs and contributions to the various institutions of the Conference and the Synod, were $2,110.17. For a church of our size, those are telling figures. Numerically also the growth represents no small percentage in both the church and the Sunday-school.

A vote of thanks was taken to the Iowa Conference and the different organizations within the church for assistance given during the past year.

Officers elected were as follows:

Secretary, J. W. Fischer; Deacons, Chas. E. Halline and J. W. Fischer; Trustees, F. Norden, A. N. Engberg,

and John A. Eklund; Sunday-school Sup't., C. O. Johnson; Organist, Miss Elvira Norden; Auditing Committee, Burtis Bengston, Lawrence Nelson, and C. O. Johnson; Ushers, Romeo Anderson, Arthur Swenson, Lawrence Nelson, Carl Swenson, Arthur Fulton, and Wm. Hagemann; Delegate to the Conference, J. W. Fischer; Alternate, A. N. Engberg.

A Pleasant Evening at the Parsonage.

Friday evening, January 16, the deacons and trustees with their families were entertained at the parsonage. The time sped quickly by with conversation, music and song.

The Parsonage.

Luncheon was served, and an after-dinner speech or two given. In connection therewith, one of the speakers took occasion in behalf of those present, to "spring a surprise" on the Pastor and his wife, presenting them with a purse of $38.50.

We are indeed greatly indebted for all this kindness, and, coming as it did so closely upon the Christmas offering, it quite took our breath away.

That makes nearly a hundred dollars we have received as a special gift in less than a month, the Christmas offering being $60.70.

For all this, and many other kindnesses shown us during the holiday season, we wish hereby to express to one and all our sincere thanks. We do appreciate highly, not only these expressions of friendship, but even more the support that has been given us the past year in our church work, which support has been earnest and efficient.

How Shall We Keep the Feast?

We deem that a question timely and appropriate for our consideration as we now stand on the eve of the Lenten season. "But," we hear some one remark, "are we not mistaken when we speak of that season as a 'feast'? Are we not approaching dangerously near to sacrilege when we use such a term in connection with Lent? For is not that season rather a time of fasting, a time for self-denial and sacrifice, for putting a curb on our appetites for the good things of life?"

We know there are a great many people who look upon Lent only from such an external and superficial point of view, and consider themselves very pious, and think they have fulfilled all righteousness when they conform in a measure to the outward letter or form, during those few weeks which constitute Lent. But the superficiality and insincerity of this their "fasting" is in most cases shown by the eagerness with which they return to a most voracious gratification of their appetites the moment Lent is

past. Luther says that while fasting and bodily preparation is a good external discipline, and is of some value if observed in *good faith,* yet that does not make us worthy members of God's Kingdom.

So may we not deceive ourselves by making external forms and practices the most important part of our Christian life during these coming weeks of Lent, nor at any time. But may there be, on the other hand, a recognized hungering and thirsting after righteousness, the righteousness which is obtained only through Christ. And may we most earnestly and diligently seek to satisfy that hunger and that thirst by taking freely of the "food," the spiritual "meat and drink" which the Lord offers in His holy Word, the Sacraments, and at His mercy seat of prayer.

Then do we observe Lent in a proper manner. And from that point of view we may call that season a "feast," for while we, through external discipline, to a certain extent at least, make it a fast, we make it a "feast" for the soul by appropriating to ourselves liberal supplies of the spiritual gifts of God, the source of which is unlimited. How then shall we keep the feast? By making Lent not only a season of external fasting, but above all a time of *spiritual feasting.*

As another answer to the question expressed in our headline, we will in conclusion refer our readers to the words of the apostle Paul addressed to the Corinthians: "Christ our Passover is sacrificial for us; therefore let us keep the feast not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Ask and Ye Shall Receive.

That was one of the precious promises which Jesus gave His disciples, and no doubt it was to them in many an hour of discouragement a source of great comfort. That promise has never been revoked. The same blessed privilege remains also for us. Yes, even we may "come boldly

unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." O, may we then as a congregation and as individuals make diligent use of that opportunity! And we certainly have need of such help and such strength as comes through prayer. For we have a great task before us as followers of and co-laborers with Christ in the extension of His kingdom. But we shall fail in our efforts unless we renew our strength and courage through communion with Him.

During the Lenten season there will be a service of prayer and meditation upon the passion of our Lord every Wednesday evening at the church. May all the members of our congregation, if possible, avail themselves of this opportunity for spiritual growth and for helping our church through this *mighty agency, prayer!* And when we pray, may it be in true faith, and with implicit trust in the Lord, for He says: "Ask, and ye shall receive."

Not My Will, But Thine, Be Done.

The dark shadows of Gethsemane were now closing in upon our suffering Saviour. Already he had endured the unutterable pain and sorrow of seeing one of the twelve, Judas Iscariot, go forth as an emissary of the devil (for satan had entered into Judas) to betray his Master into the hands of the enemy, and to receive as recompense for his treachery thirty pieces of silver. The dear Lord had now arrived at the place where He oft had gone before to rest, but where He now was to face the hour of deepest gloom, and endure the bitterest agony.

He is troubled in spirit; "His soul is exceeding sorrowful." And do we wonder at His deep distress? We must not forget His truly human nature. He was like unto us in all things, yet without sin. Therefore it was possible for Him to be deeply distressed. We cannot comprehend the depth of His sorrow; we cannot fathom the burden that He bears in this dark hour. The Pure and Sinless bearing the weight and awful consequences of the

sins, not only of one individual, not of His own people alone, but of *all the world.*

His agony is great, His sweat is as drops of blood falling to the ground. As we look upon that "Man of Sorrows," writhing in agony, how forcibly the words of the prophet come to us: "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow."

He prays His Father earnestly that if possible this bitter cup might be taken from Him. Yet He adds, in perfect obedience, perfect resignation: "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

O, the blessedness for us all that lies in that fact, the perfect obedience of Christ to His Father's will! For it was God's will to place upon His Son the penalty and condemnation of sin, that we might be free, and not come into condemnation, but pass from death unto life.

"Not my will, but Thine, be done."

A world of salvation is comprehended in those words of Christ spoken in the hour of His deepest agony.

May we then not only faithfully appropriate to ourselves that salvation, but may we also in the hours of trouble and sorrow that we may be called upon to face, ever be willing to say with our dear Saviour: "Not my will, but Thine, be done!"

He Prayed More Earnestly.

We read those words in the second part of the history of the passion of our Lord.

They are descriptive of the manner in which He met and endured the hour of deepest sorrow and affliction: namely, with prayer, earnest prayer.

This was not the only time Jesus prayed. It was His custom to pray. How often do we not read of Him, that He went aside, up in the mountains to pray, that before performing a great miracle, the raising of Lazarus, for instance, or the feeding of the multitude, and many others, He would lift up His eyes unto heaven in prayer to His Father.

So, as the shadows deepen around Him in Gethsemane, we find Him engaged in earnest prayer. And as the forces of evil concentrate their efforts against Him, and the awful abyss of hell yawns before Him—for it was a part of His great work of redemption to conquer death and hell—He prays *more earnestly.*

Dear friends, how do you meet the hours of sorrow and affliction that inevitably form a part of your life? For "in this world ye shall have tribulation." There is no escape from it as long as we sojourn here. But how do we meet those tribulations? Do we try to meet them in our own strength? Then the result will be defeat and despair.

"With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected." But our gracious heavenly Father has not left us without a recourse in the trying hours of our life. He has given us the same opportunity of prayer that our Saviour so earnestly and diligently used. He encourages us to "call upon Him with all cheerfulness and confidence, as beloved children entreat their affectionate parent." May we then make faithful use of such blessed opportunities!

And may our prayer be *earnest!* Then the Lord has promised to incline His ear unto us. And the thicker the gloom, the deeper the sorrow, the more bitter the agony, may we, as our precious Saviour, pray the *"more earnestly."* The gloom will then be dispersed, the sorrow and agony be turned into joy and gladness.

For God is faithful, and will not allow us to be tempted above our ability to endure, but hearkening to our *earnest prayers,* and considering the insufficiency of our strength, He will in our afflictions "make a way to escape, so that we may be able to bear them."

From Darkness to Light.

The shadows hung dark over Golgotha
And over the Holy City.
The "Daughter of Zion" had hastened to draw,
Without fear, without shame, without pity,

O'er self and her people the sad disgrace
To crucify Jesus, the Saviour,
Who came to give aid to a fallen race,
And make known unto them the Lord's favor.

From village to village, from place to place,
He had gone with a zeal ever burning,
Proclaiming the message so full of grace,
That night unto day was now turning.
Ye people that walketh in darkness, behold!
A light unto you is appearing:
The bright "Morning Star," by the prophets foretold,
Has aris'n, the clouds disappearing.

No more shall the people by sin be opprest,
No more by its shackles be fettered,
The Saviour is here, let your fears be at rest,
For though humble and poor, and unlettered,
In the eyes of the world, yet, 'tis true, this is He
Whom the Father has sent in His kindness,
To heal broken-hearted and set captives free,
And to lead those who grope in their blindness.

But the city Jerusalem, fair as the day,
In earthly glory and splendor,
In "counsels ungodly" and in "sinner's way,"
Continued as ever to wander,
And would not consider that this was the day
Of salvation, the day of repentance,
But hardened its heart, nor its conscience obeyed,
But passed upon Him the death sentence.

On Golgotha cross mid the taunts and the jeers
Of the angry mob there assembled,
They nailed the blest Saviour, but soon their fears
Were aroused—for the earth now trembled.
The veil of the temple was rent in twain,
And darkness the earth did cover,
As the Lamb of God was for sinners slain,
And became for us the Passover.

In the tomb they laid the Crucified One,
The One who for sinners was given,
When the evening had come, and the work was done,
To which by their sins they'd been driven.
"At last 'tis accomplished," we hear them say,
"Well done is this deed and 'twill merit
Our countrymen's praises for aye and aye,
Their good will and love we'll inherit."

Alas, O Jerusalem, knowest thou not,
And is it beyond comprehension,
That sealed is thy doom, and upon thee a blot
Is placed, which e'er in its mention
Doth sully thy name, and cause nations to grieve
With sorrow and pain without measure,
That in Jesus, the Saviour, thou would'st not believe,
But spurned Him, our most precious Treasure?

Yes, dark hung the shadows o'er Golgotha,
For the "Light of the world" had vanished,
Now hope in nothing the faithful saw,
For their hope and their courage were banished.
Their Lord and Master and precious Friend,
Whose love they'd so deeply cherished,
Was crucified now, and their peace was at end,
By the hands of their foes He had perished.

Yet, lift up your heads, O ye sorrowing ones!
Let your hearts be filled with new gladness!
And list to the message, as now it comes,
To replace your sorrow and sadness.
A message of joy that shall know no end
Comes forth from the tomb, the drear prison:
"He is not here whom ye seek"—dear friend,
The Lord, your Saviour, is risen.

Ris'n is the Saviour, O morn of hope,
Thou hast dawned again, and we hail Thee!
Gone are the shadows and widened the scope
Of our vision, with joy we hail Thee.
Now can we say with th' Apostle of old:
O death, where's thy sting, and O grave, where
Is now thy vict'ry, thy power to hold
Thy prey 'gainst the Victor, our Saviour?

Thanks be to God on this Easter morn
For the victory He has given!
No more by doubt and by anguish torn,
Nor by fears and misgivings riven
Our souls shall be, for the God of Life
Unto us *true life* has given,
Through Christ, who has conquered in the strife,
And prepared us a place in heaven.

"Who Shall Roll Us Away the Stone?"

The three women who had stood faithfully at the cross on Good Friday, were now, in the early Easter morn, on their way to the grave where Jesus lay, bringing sweet spices with which to anoint Him, that they might give Him, even in death, a token of their loyalty and love. But an obstacle suddenly confronted them, which threatened to thwart their noble purpose. They remembered the heavy stone that had been rolled over the door of the tomb. How were they to overcome that obstacle? How gain an entrance to the tomb, which had been so effectively sealed up? These were misgivings which made them sad, and they ask one another helplessly: "Who shall roll us away the stone?"

But when they arrived at the tomb, they found there was no ground for their misgivings. The obstacle had already been overcome; the stone had been rolled away, and an angel greeted them with the joyous message that the Lord was risen. How infinitely better than they had hoped!

Dear reader, a Christian's life is full of just such experiences. We are actuated by noble impulses; we would do something to show our love and loyalty to our Master, and to promote His cause among our fellow men. But suddenly we find ourselves thwarted in our purpose. Some seemingly insurmountable obstacle rises up in our path; some heavy stone of misfortune, of adversity, of sorrow, lies formidable and uncompromising between us and the goal we seek. We are helpless. We think: "O, what is the use? We cannot accomplish what we have undertaken; we might as well retrace our steps, and abandon our purpose."

Nay, not so. May we follow the example of these women and continue on our way, nevertheless. And we shall find that the trouble and hardships which we have anticipated will in some manner, which we could not beforehand comprehend, be taken care of. If we only leave those things trustingly to the Lord, He will take care of them, even though He must, for lack of human agencies

who are willing to do His will, send an angel directly from heaven to do it.

So let us not be discouraged. Let us look trustingly forward. Let us grapple to our hearts the hope which the poet so beautifully expressed, when he said:

"Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;
And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away."

War.

Along the southern horizon of our land and across the waters of the Mexican Gulf the war clouds have for the last fortnight loomed dark and ominous. War is, moreover, the subject that has been on the lips of everyone. In the halls of Congress and at our state capitals; in the busy offices of men of affairs, as well as in the quiet shelter of the millions of peaceful homes of our nation, the question of the day has been the ever-gathering war clouds along the Rio Grande. Our flag has been insulted, and other offences against the honor and dignity of our country have been committed, and what ought we do about it? Many of the more "bellicose" have clamored for war, and contended that Huerta and his followers should long since have been brought to terms, or driven out of Mexico at the point of the sword. Others, more conservative, have stood with the administration in favor of a policy of "watchful waiting," even with the Secretary's of State qualification of "anxious" added.

Now since mediation by other powers has been agreed to by both parties, the outlook for a speedy settlement of the differences has assumed a somewhat brighter aspect. Let us therefore hope that the war clouds may be dispersed, and the question at issue settled without further bloodshed.

This present crisis with Mexico gives us an unsought opportunity to remind you, dear reader, of another war, which is not only imminent, but which is now on; a war, which to us who profess the name of Christ is of vital im-

portance, for the reason that it is a fight to the finish, a struggle for life or death, the outcome of which will determine, not only our temporal, but our eternal destiny. We refer to that struggle to which the Apostle Paul exhorts, when he says: "Fight the good fight of faith." And of which he again says: "We battle with 'powers and principalities' of evil." That is a war which has raged incessantly since the first encounter with those evil powers in the garden of Eden, which first encounter ended so disastrously to the human race. Those enemies never cease their warfare. In one form or other they continue to insult our flag, i. e. the standard of the Lord of hosts, and daily do they hurl their defiance at His just commands. Shall we, the soldiers of the cross, stand idly by and let their defiance go unchallenged? No! Here is an instance where we cannot employ a policy of waiting watchfulness. True, we must "watch and pray without ceasing," but we must do more that that; we must "fight the good fight of faith." There must be no flag of truce with that enemy, no mediation, no parleying about terms.—Unconditional surrender of the enemy; nothing less. Nay, more than that is what is required in this case. For knowing that the evil cohorts of the prince of this world never surrender, we must fight it out, and as we have already said, it is a fight to the finish.

There are many, we know, who, in the face of such a proposition would rather arbitrate, rather enter into negotiations with their adversary and even make concessions. But the true soldier of the cross continues to fight unto the end. Nor does he fight in vain, for he battles under a standard of which it can truly be said: "In hoc signo vinces." Yes, in the sign of the cross we conquer through the power of Him who was crucified, but who liveth and reigneth for evermore.

So, dear friend, buckle on your armor and go forth to the conflict. But remember—*no mediation, no arbitration.* May we not forget that our *only course* is to *fight until the victory is won!*

"The Lord of hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget."

Peace.

As we pen these notes, the final outcome of the negotiations now going on for peace with Mexico is still unknown. And while we wait for further developments, let us call your attention to a peace of which we may be absolutely assured. In the editorial on the front page of this issue, we pointed out the fact that for the soldier of the cross there must be incessant warfare against the enemies of his salvation. The nature of the fight he is waging makes this necessary. Yet, it is also peculiar to the Christian warfare that in the midst of the fight, under the din of battle, there is a possibility of peace; a peace which, indeed, passeth all understanding. That peace comes through faith in the "Captain" who is the "Prince of Peace." For while He says: "In this world ye shall have tribulations," He also adds in the same sentence: "But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." So let us not lose courage, even if the battle continues to rage until the end of our days, but look ever to Him who said: "Peace I give unto you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid!" And let us remember that when the struggle is ended and the sword is exchanged for the palm of victory, then there shall be peace which is lasting, yea, which will know no end.

At Paxton, Ill.

We are writing some of these items from Paxton, Ill., where we are at present (May 4) engaged in a campaign for funds with which to continue the elimination, not of Huerta, but of our church debt. We arrived here Saturday evening, and are being very hospitably entertained at the home of our good friend, the Rev. A. P. Westerberg, who

is in charge of the congregation at this place. This congregation has a large membership, numbering 800 communicants. They worship in a large and beautiful church which was erected in 1908. Paxton is a historic place in our Synod, the Augustana College and Theological Seminary having been located here until 1875, when it was moved to Rock Island, Ill. The old College grounds have lately been sold, but two of the old buildings still remain as landmarks of the pioneer days of Christian culture among the Swedish Lutherans of America. Paxton itself is now an ideal country town of some 4,000 inhabitants, and has ten miles of paved streets, beautiful city parks, Chatauqua grounds, and a great number of beautiful homes. Some of the leading business men are: A. J. Lawrence and Sons, Clothing Company; Albert P. Larson and Co., Clothiers; Johnson Bros., Dry Goods Co.; C. A. Nordgren, Hardware; Johnson Jewelry Co.; Victor Lundberg, Drugs; C. G. A. Challstrand, Groceries; Peterson Clothing Co.; and Peter Lundahl, Meats and Vegetables.

Sunday, May 3, we had the pleasure to preach to large audiences morning and evening at Paxton, and in the afternoon at Rankins. The results of the first half day's subscription work were $47.00. Then a heavy rain came on and put a temporary stop to our work. We are now trying to make the most of the situation, while the shower passes, preparing the copy for the Messenger. With greetings to all the friends in the Mound City, we now say "au revoir."

Address to the Catechumens. (Ps. I.)

Dear young friends, as your pastor it is a part of my duty on this important and memorable day of your life, your confirmation, to say something that might be of benefit as advice and guidance in your future career. In doing so, I will base my remarks upon the first Psalm.

To-day you both look backward upon your past life, and also forward into the future, toward the unseen days yet to come. The thought of the past brings joyous mem-

ories of your happy childhood, for childhood is indeed the happiest period of our life. Our experiences then are on the whole pleasant. Our days run on calm and peaceful as the placid waters of some sheltered stream that is protected from the storms by the sturdy oaks that grow on its banks. In your homes you have thus far, in some degree at least, been protected from the storms of life. You have had very few cares, and those you have had, have been of minor importance. Your every wish, almost, has been satisfied by indulgent parents, your hopes have, in the main, been fulfilled. The sad experiences of hopes unfulfilled, of purposes thwarted, of labor unremitted, of efforts that have been in vain; experiences, moreover, of sorrow and affliction, of hearts aching because of recognized shortcomings and a realized inability to meet your duties and fulfill your calling as you would like—those experiences have as yet scarcely crossed your threshold.

Your life has been, on the whole, calm and peaceful. From this day on it will be somewhat different. Not that you have all at once attained to full manhood and womanhood; not that you will from the moment you pass out through the portals of this temple to-day step into the very vortex of life, with its many exacting duties and responsibilities. No, we hope that you will continue, for some time at least, to be children, if not in stature, yet in heart; i. e. in the sense that your life will continue to be characterized by humility and obedience to your parents and above all to your heavenly Father, and that you will retain the simple, childlike faith that you now have. For the Lord tells us that in His Word, that he who does not accept the kingdom of God as a child shall not enter therein.

But notwithstanding all this, it will be different in the future from what it has been in the past. Your life will be more troubled; you will come into contact more and more with the world in your daily work, and in your various relations with your fellowmen, and to some extent, at least, you will from this time forth have to share with your

parents the responsibilities of your own temporal and spiritual welfare.

How shall you be prepared to meet those responsibilities? Largely by being forewarned and instructed as to what you will encounter.

That has been the purpose of the course of religious instruction that you have now completed, and that is the purpose of this address. Christ forewarned His disciples in regard to what they would meet as they went about fulfilling their calling, and thus it is necessary for you to be forewarned, for you are also His disciples, and you will experience the same as they, only in a lesser degree.

The first fact that I would emphasize, then, is that the world with which you will come into contact is an evil world. I do not wish to be a pessimist and portray things in a darker color than necessary. But I speak the truth when I say this is an evil world, and it is important that you know the truth.

On every hand you will be surrounded by temptations and evil influences, and what are you going to do with them? You must *combat* them. Over against those influences you must, as Paul says to his young friend Timothy, *"fight the good fight of faith."* But so subtly does the tempter lay his snares, and so gradually and skillfully will those influences work upon you, that you will not always recognize them in time to shun them. And there is where the greatest danger lies. David very strikingly illustrates that in the first verse of this Psalm. He speaks of "walking in the counsel of the ungodly"—"standing in the way of sinners"—and "sitting in the seat of the scornful." Notice the sequence there. *"Walking* in counsel of the *ungodly.* That is the first step toward a life of sin. Then *"standing* in the way of sinners;" *lingering* among them, becoming *accustomed* to sin. And finally, *"sitting* in the seat of the scornful;" i. e. having become *established* in sin.

How often has not that sad drama been enacted! If we consider, for instance, the number of young people confirmed every year in our churches and the percentage of

those who gradually drop away from church we realize that these words of the psalmist are not empty and meaningless. Allow me to illustrate the manner of transition into the world of many of those who thus drop away from church; by which manner, also you, young friends, might be led astray if you are not continuously on your guard. Companions whom you have met incidentally, or, perhaps, at the place where you are employed, will call at your home some evening and invite you to go out with them. You ask: "Where are you going?" "Oh, just for a walk, perhaps up to the park." You go with them, for you see no harm in that, though you have misgivings that they are not the right sort of companions. As you go along they enter into conversation with you, and before long their conversation will drift into channels such as a Christian cannot sanction. Their language is unclean and degrading. You are "walking in the counsels of the ungodly." Next time, if you go with them again, you will be walking down the street and you will pass an open door; it may be to a saloon or a public dance hall, or any other of the hundreds of dens of sin and vice that the enemy of your soul has sown broadcast. The companions will say to you: "Let's step in and look on a while." You think: "There is surely no harm in just looking on, and I will only stay a minute." But you stay one minute, five minutes, fifteen minutes, and—before you know it, you have stayed an hour. Next evening you go again, and stay a little longer. It's so interesting, so fascinating. But do you not see, dear friend, you are *"standing in the way of sinners."* You are loitering in the place and the company of the servants of sin and vice. Time goes on; your conscience becomes more and more dulled. Finally those same companions, or others of the same stamp, will take you out to some other rendezvous place of the ungodly. It may be a place where they drink, play cards, gamble; or, where they meet behind closed doors, in secret, to give horrible, sinful oaths, to take part in exercises that are most sacrilegious, and in so-called "services" from which, however, the name of Christ is banished, for

CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 1914.

Top Row, Left to Right: Frank Windegren, Hilma Olson, Arvid Swenson, Viola Cederstrom, Edwin Anderson, Elna Johanson, Max Palmquist, Anna Swenson, Roy Johnson, Hildegarde Cederquist.

Bottom Row, Left to Right: Rose Hagenson, Olga Eskilson, Martha Anderson, the Pastor, Idella Norden, Viola Fischer, Louise Nelson.

the reason that some of those there gathered are infidels. You enter in, are received among them, given membership in their organizations, etc. And there, at such places from thenceforth you spend your evenings. You have taken the third and decisive step toward a life of sin; you are *"sitting in the seat of the scornful;"* you are established in sin and in the ways of the ungodly.

That has been the experience of thousands who have begun well as Christians—even as you to-day are making a good beginning—but who have not had the moral courage to say *no* to the temptations that have beset them. How true are not the words of a certain poet who says:

> **"Sin is a creature of such hideous mien,**
> **That to be shunned needs only to be seen.**
> **Yet, seen too oft, familiar with its face,**
> **We first endure, then pity, then embrace."**

Therefore we repeat again the warning of the psalmist: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." And let me, in closing, tell you all here present, whether young or old, and whatever your life may be at this moment, the time will come, sooner or later, when you would give *your all* to hear from the lips of Him who is the Judge of the living and of the dead this testimony, this word of approval: *"Blessed* art thou, because thou hast heeded my word and shunned the ways of sin."

Then, friends, begin *to-day* to heed God's word and to follow it's precepts! And you, dear catechumens, watch and pray lest you fall into temptation. And may the Spirit of the Almighty God be with you and protect you that you might keep the faith! Then shall be fulfilled upon you the words of David in the third verse of this Psalm, when he says of that man who shuns evil temptations and clings to the word of God: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

A Memorable Day.

The confirmation exercises at the church Sunday afternoon were beautiful and impressive. Notwithstanding the excessive heat, the large auditorium was filled long before the services began. As the organist, Miss Norden, played a march, the class of sixteen came forward and took their places around the altar. It was an impressive scene. In the examination, which covered the entire small catechism and parts of the large catechism, the members of the class all acquitted themselves with credit. A solo was sung by Miss Hilma Samuelson, and numbers rendered by the choir and male quartette. Mr. C. O. Johnson, representing the church council and the congregation, awarded, in well-chosen words, the Bibles and certificates. The address was given by the pastor.

In the Communion service, which followed, a very large number participated.

Though the services altogether lasted almost three hours, the large audience followed with unbroken interest to the end. The main auditorium has a present seating capacity of 250. Yet, the Sunday-school room was pressed into service in order to accommodate all, from which fact the attendance is shown to have approached three hundred.

May the impression of this memorable day linger with us; and may we as a congregation and as an individual by faithful prayers and worthy examples of a godly life assist the confirmed in keeping intact their faith and their confirmation vows!

The Signs of the Times.

For the last six or eight months there has been much talk among all classes of people of the supposed existing dull times. It is claimed that work is not as plentiful as it ought to be for the laboring man; in business there seems to be a general depression; the manufacturer complains that the demand for his products does not correspond to his capacity for output; and so on, ad infinitum.

We are inclined to believe that much of this is purely imagination, or as President Wilson expresses it, a "psychological depression." The calamity howler must periodically open his safety valve and let out some of his superfluous grouch. A careful and unbiased observation of things and conditions as they are, will, we are sure, convince the fairminded that there is no cause for material depression. Let us see: The principal grain-producing States of the Union have just harvested a record crop of wheat; in the great majority of the agricultural States rains have been plentiful this season, and other conditions are just right for producing record crops in other farm products. Corn and oats never had more favorable conditions and a better outlook than just now; and those crops are so far advanced that they are now practically out of danger. Thus it will be seen that crops in general all over the country were never better than they are this season. That fact alone assures prosperity to a very great degree, for the agricultural products are the foundation for material prosperity among people of all classes. Furthermore, the wheels of industry are moving on as before. Also, if we observe men in all walks of life in their enjoyment of the comforts and luxuries of life, the argument of depression and hard times is at once exploded. There is no diminution in their enjoyment of those comforts and luxuries. The craze for fineries in apparel is ever on the increase; the theaters, the nickelodeons, the summer gardens, and the other innumerable places of amusement, the regular attendance of which all crave no small expense, are now as before crowded, invariably crowded to their full capacity. All this demonstrates that there is plenty of money in circulation, and that no one is worried, not even the laboring man, about the forthcoming of the next dollar. So, a careful diagnosis of present conditions will show that there is no material depression, else there would be a lull in the enjoyment of the luxuries of life.

But there is one field of human activity in which today there is cause for depression, and that is the *spiritual*

field. Not that the Lord is less able or less willing now than in times past to supply our spiritual needs, for He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever", but that man is less willing to consider the spiritual side of life and to recognize that there are spiritual needs which only the spiritual gifts of God can satisfy. He chases the dollar, and the pleasures and luxuries that the dollar can buy, until he has entirely forgotten his soul. And so as to his soul he is starving, while as to his body he is more and more becoming a glutton. So when we look at existing conditions and the signs of the times from that point of view, then there is real reason for depression among those who are laboring to make this world the Kingdom of God and his Christ. May the Lord look in pity and mercy upon the ever growing *materialists* of our times, and cause them to realize the awful truth contained in His words: "What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and yet loseth his soul."

De Kalb, Ill., July 15, 1914.

The Signs of the Times.

In view of the flaming color of the news that the daily press has given us for the past two or three weeks, and considering the trend of current events on the other side of the "waters", it may not be amiss to pen once more a few lines under the above topic. We used the same headline in the last issue of the Messenger, referring then in particular to conditions in the industrial world. Now our attention is directed toward political conditions and international relations among the countries of Europe. And what are the signs of the times? They are grave and alarming indeed. Every indication points to the fact that we stand on the verge of a European war, nay, of a *world-conflict;* a struggle, which, as to its far-reaching consequences, will know no other limits than those of the terrestrial sphere on which we live. The *greatest war of all times* is *even now* in progress. The countries across the sea are in

the throes of a struggle that will spill the life-blood of many nations, and without doubt change the map of Europe. And all this in the enlightened 20th Century, and in the face of all our Peace Congresses, all individual and concerted efforts at peace! Indeed, there is reason to decry our much boasted civilization. In disgust and almost despair may we cry with the philosopher of old: *"O tempora, O mores!"* But such is the inevitable consequence when the spirit and the principles of Christianity are not permitted to rule the actions of men and nations.

When the old barbaric principle of "Might is right" is made the watchword, and when the insatiable lust for conquest and territorial expansion is allowed to overrule better judgment, how can there but be strife among the nations?

Brother will rise up against brother to slay him, even as did Cain, and peoples in whose veins the same blood flows, will exert every effort to exterminate one another. As Topelius says in his article on war: "War is the Cain of Universal History going about with his club to slay his brother."

He further says: "Eliminate the entire human race save two; put these each at the opposite remotest corners of the earth, and there would still be war."

And so it is, and so it will continue to be until mankind, both individually and collectively, is willing to be ruled by the spirit of Him, at whose coming the heavenly hosts proclaimed, *"Peace on earth, good will toward men."*

To the Readers of the Messenger.

You are possibly looking for some news as to the work in which we are now engaged, gathering funds for the elimination of our church debt. We sometimes hear of "off years", and thus this year can certainly be termed when it comes to matters monetary. The dull times that we began to notice at the beginning of the year have become just a little duller as each succeeding month has come

and gone, and the man with a dollar to spare has become as scarce as the proverbial honest man, whom the old philosopher, Diogenes, started out to find. As we said in the last issue, there has, up to this time, been no real reason for financial or industrial depression. But "the powers that be" have seemingly decreed that there shall be hard times, and their decree has had upon the masses the effect, it seems, that these powers desired; greater effect, it seems, than famine and pestilence and the ravages of war put together could produce. Now, since all Europe has become aflame with war, prices of commodities will, of course, go up, and then there will be real reason for hard times among the common class of consumers. So to find a man with a dollar to spare in these days takes more than the lantern of Diogenes; it requires nothing short of the *highest powered searchlight.* Since we are not equipped with such an instrument, we have not located as many dollars as under ordinary circumstances might be expected. Still miracles are wrought in these trying times, if we but have the faith. Thus at one place we visited, Ludington, Mich., after preaching the morning sermon, the audience came forward and gave an offering which amounted to $45.00. Not so bad for an hour's work, in times like these. When the hot summer months are over, and the farmers of Ia. and Neb. have garnered in their crops, we hope to do better, for they are the class of people who are profiting by rising prices.

Therefore, a month or two hence we hope to be able to give more favorable reports.

Arnot, Pa., Aug. 15, 1914.

What's in a Name?

The pertinence of the above time-worn question is illustrated in the following narrative, incident to the beginning of the St. Louis mission. It was in the early nineties. St. Louis was as yet an unknown quantity as regards our Swedish Lutheran church work. But the man at the head of the Iowa Conference, the late Dr. Ludvig Holmes, was

a man of initiative and enterprise, and true missionary spirit. When therefore rumors came to him that there was a considerable number of Swedish people in St. Louis, he concluded that that was a matter worth while investigating. Nor did he lose any time in putting such a thought into operation. At the earliest opportunity he bought a ticket for the "Mound City," with the purpose of ascertaining at once the number of Swedish people located there, and the chances of taking up missionary work among them.

On arriving at the Union Station, he determined to lose no time in locating a Swedish family, from whom he might get the necessary information, and from whose home he might get his bearings and work out his plans for locating the others and interesting them in his project.

Being utterly unknown in the city, and having not so much as a name or an address, his first step was to seek aid from the city directory. His search there was immediately rewarded, for no sooner had he opened the ponderous volume, than his eyes fell upon the name of *"Mrs. Lina Johnson."* "Aha," thought the venerable Doctor, "here we have it; for surely this is a name as *Swedish* as any name in *Småland* or *Skåne* itself." Accordingly he started out in the direction indicated.

But he had not proceeded far before dire misgivings began to crowd in upon him. The neighborhood, to which the given address led him, was all but inviting. The miserable shacks seemed to be falling over one another, or embracing one another, as if in sympathy because of their dilapidated condition. Everything gave evidence of carelessness and filth. "This looks discouraging," thought the missionary. "Can it be possible that the Swedes of St. Louis live in such a section, and under such conditions?" But he proceeded, for he thought: "It must be some poor unfortunate family who because of some unavoidable circumstance has located here. At any rate I can get from them the information needed."

The knock at the door was followed by the sound of

heavy footsteps across the bare floor within. Presently the door was opened, and the swarthy figure of a portly colored woman stood forth. Dr. Holmes was almost nonplussed. Such an encounter at the very beginning of Swedish Lutheran missionary efforts in St. Louis was certainly unexpected. "But what's the worry? Of course it is only the washerwoman who happens to be here to-day. So near the *Mason and Dixon Line* white people, of even the *highest standing,* have colored servants." Summoning his courage, therefore, the missionary asked: "Does Mrs. Lina Johnson live here?" "Yessah." "Would you call her? I would like to speak to her a minute." "Mrs. Lina Johnson? Why man, dat am *me.*" —

"What's in a name!" thought Dr. H., as he quickly beat his retreat. "I have often heard that question repeated, and I know now there is reason for asking it. Names can certainly be misleading sometimes."

The outlook thus far was, indeed, *"dark"* and gloomy. But as we have already said, Dr. Holmes was a man not easily discouraged where the interests of God's Kingdom were at stake. He therefore proceeded undaunted, and in a short time the Swedes were located, and the plan of taking up church work among them was gotten under way.— And *thus* began our Swedish Lutheran work in St. Louis.

The above incident illustrates not only the fact that names may be misleading, but also what strange experiences a pioneer missionary, even on our home fields, may sometimes encounter.

But "all's well that ends well." Dr. Holmes had the pleasure not a long time afterwards to organize the Gethsemane Swedish Lutheran church of St. Louis, and to be present a few years later at the dedication of the first place of assemblage, owned by them, the Chapel at 1309 California Ave.; and also at the dedication of the present church edifice at 3116 St. Vincent Ave., which event was celebrated October 3, 1909. The congregation will always hold in reverence the memory of the pioneer missionary and organizer of the church, Dr. Ludvig Holmes.

(N. B.—The incident related above was told by Dr. Holmes himself on the occasion of his visit to St. Louis at the time of the dedication of the present church. We have therefore taken the liberty here to recall it.)

Appreciative Worshipers.

It was at the close of the Sunday evening service in one of the churches of Iowa, which we have lately visited in the interest of our St. Louis Mission. We were being introduced by the local pastor to some of his parishioners. Presently a couple came along who were introduced as Mr. and Mrs. L—. "I am glad to meet you, pastor," said the latter. "You visit B—n, Mo., occasionally, do you not?" "We have been there a few times; however, not recently," was the reply. "Well, you were there one Sunday, some four or five years ago?" "Yes." "You remember meeting a certain family A——, who had come some distance to attend?" "Yes." "Well, Mrs. A.—— is my sister; they now live here in Iowa, and I wanted to tell you that they have not forgotten that Sunday morning. They often speak of it, and they are still thankful for that service." We recalled the incident and we will now let our memory reproduce it in the columns of the "Messenger". It was in the fall of 1909. We had been commissioned by the President of the District to visit this little community in northern Missouri, where there is a small Swedish Lutheran congregation, with, however, no regularly appointed pastor.

It had been raining all Saturday afternoon and evening, and it was still drizzling Sunday morning. The country roads were therefore wellnigh impassable, and as we drove up to the little church from the farmhouse where we had been entertained since the day before, we concluded that the congregation would that morning be small. Upon entering, however, we were agreeably surprised. The church was filled. As we were about to begin, we noticed through the window a carriage halt in front of the church

door, which seemed, more abundantly than the others, belabored with mud. As the organist commenced the prelude, the family who had occupied the carriage came in and took their places directly in front of the pulpit—the only pew empty. There was something about them that made us feel that we would that day have at least some attentive listeners. Their manner as they entered the sanctuary; their reverently bowed heads as the brief silent prayer was offered; the indescribable longing that was mirrored in their faces as the hymn was sung and the Scriptures read—all this made it evident that we had before us, in that family at least, *"appreciative worshipers."* And as the service went on through the different parts: the hymns, the prayer, the preparatory sermon for Communion, and the Communion itself, their interest and appreciation seemed to grow. Moreover, it seemed contagious. Here and there over the audience a face was lit up with a joy which seemed to say: "A day in Thy courts, O Lord, is better than a thousand." The Spirit of God was present that morning in that little weatherbeaten church, and His power was felt.

At the conclusion of the service we had the pleasure to meet this family, and with tears flowing down their cheeks they told the following: "We live in a little town twenty-five miles distant, but we heard there would be services here today, and so we drove over." "What! You don't mean to say that you have driven twenty-five miles in this rain and over these roads?" "Yes, we have, and oh, the Lord has so richly rewarded us for so doing. It was blessed to sit once more in His sanctuary, to hear His Word and to partake of His holy Sacrament. We used to live in St—n, Iowa, where, as you know, there is a large congregation. We had the opportunity to go to church every Sunday, but we did not do so; we did not then consider that necessary. We went only occasionally. But since we moved down to the town where we now live, and where there is no Swedish Lutheran Church, in fact no Protestant Church at all, we have learnt to realize what blessings we

once possessed but now miss. O, if there were services here in B—n regularly! We would certainly, as often as possible, drive these twenty-five miles for the privilege to attend."

That was five years ago, and now on our recent visit to Iowa we learned that this family, who have moved back to their former home, still hold in grateful remembrance that Sunday morning, and the services, to attend which they had driven twenty-five miles through rain and mud.

These are little inside glimpses into the life and experience of a pastor. They may seem too personal to relate, but we could not forego the pleasure to do so. The experiences of a servant of God are not always so pleasant. More than once the temptation comes to be a Jonah and flee from the calling and the duties the Lord has placed upon us, when we see among the masses the ever-declining interest in things spiritual. But, nevertheless, there is at times a "golden lining" to even the darkest cloud. We meet occasionally an oasis in the desert, where our soul is refreshed. Such an *oasis* was that Sunday morning in the little weatherbeaten country church with its *"appreciative worshipers."*

The Mission Meeting

is now a thing of the past, and yet not entirely past, for we believe that in its effect it will prove far-reaching, and cover a much longer period than the few days during which it lasted. For that reason we believe also that we are justified in giving the account of it the most prominent place in this issue of the Messenger. For some time we had been looking forward to this event with great anticipation, for it had been two years since the last Mission meeting was held in our church, and our experience has always been that such meetings are seasons of refreshing. Our hopes of having four visiting pastors with us were frustrated, the Reverends Ekholm and Stark being prevented at the last moment from coming, the former through sickness and the

latter by pressing duties at home. So only two brethren came, but was not that the apostolic number? Did not Christ send out the disciples by twos? Moreover, we found that these brethren had come prepared to meet the emergency, perfectly willing to do the work of four, which they also did, speaking no fewer than seven times each during their stay with us. We were fortunate in having fine weather throughout, except on Saturday evening, when it rained, rendering the attendance smaller than it otherwise would have been. Sunday was the great day of the meeting. The brethren then had the pleasure of speaking to large audiences at every session. The Sunday-school, the morning and evening services, and the Luther League. The participation in the Lord's Supper, which was celebrated at the morning service, was more general than at many previous occasions, which was, indeed, gratifying to see. Also we had the pleasure to receive twelve new members into the fellowship of the church. The offering at the morning service amounted to $9.70, and the total for the meeting was $24.35. Considering the bad weather Saturday night and the consequent small attendance at that service, these are telling figures.

A few statistics in this connection to show the recent growth and the present strength of our congregation would probably not be amiss. At the beginning of the year there were 139 communicant members. Since then through confirmation, on confession and by church letter, thirty-four communicant members have been added. Two have moved away to another city and are active members in the Lutheran church there. This leaves our present communicant membership 171.

We doubt whether any other congregation in the Conference, in proportion to size and condition of the field, has had as large a growth during the same period. We have therefore great reason to rejoice and be thankful to the Lord for the blessing granted our work, and our present favorable outlook should spur us on to even more consecrated effort.

Getting back to the Mission meeting, we repeat that it was a season of refreshing to us all. The sermons preached by the brethren were at each session strong messages which did much to establish and confirm our faith, inspire new hope, and enhance our fervor. We thank them for their untiring work among us, and wish them eminent success on their local fields. And now may we here let the seed thus sown among us continue to grow and bear fruit; fruits of repentance, and fruits of faith and love.

Gloria in Excelsis!

With the above as our keynote, we begin the penning of the lines that will constitute the last issue of the Messenger for 1914. Another year lies behind us almost completed, and though our experiences during its course have been many and varied, alternating between joys and sorrows, sunshine and shadows, we must admit, as we now sum them up, that they have been in the main propitious. Whatever may be said of 1914 and the stringent times and unfavorable conditions that have existed, when we compare our lots with millions of others both at home and abroad, the fact remains that it has been, after all, a year of grace, abounding in great blessings.

That being true, is it not meet that we should with united voices say, "Gloria in Excelsis?" For to whom else is honor and glory due but to God in the highest? He has averted many a danger that was imminent to us as a nation, and as individuals He has kept our foot from many a snare. He has "satisfied our mouths, and our hearts, with good things." In short, He has been, now, as ever, "the Giver of every good and perfect gift."

Then there is another reason for the superscription: Only a week hence we celebrate that beautiful season that means so much to us all, Christmas, with its message of joy and peace and salvation. We are reminded of the first Christmas morning when the glad tidings were brought to the shepherds in the valley of Judea, of the newborn King, and we catch the strains of that heavenly song: "Glory to

God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

To repeat those glad tidings to its many readers is the pleasant duty of the Messenger in this issue. And, friends, may the message strike a responsive chord in your hearts! Will you not, as the shepherds of old, make haste to go and see for yourself "this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us," that He in His infinite love has given to us a Saviour? And will you not accept the peace and good will that is offered through Him? Do so this coming Christmastide! If never before, list *now* to the heavenly tidings! It will fill your hearts with joy, make all things new, and open up to you visions of glory never before experienced. Your heartstrings will then vibrate in perfect harmony as you listen to the angelic chorus: "Gloria in Excelsis."

PART IV. 1915.

"Julottan."

The early morning Christmas service, "Julottan," was this year, as usual, one of the star numbers in our calendar of holiday services and festivities. The morning was ideal, and a large audience had gathered in the beautifully decorated and lighted church. "All Hail to Thee, O Blessed Morn!" rang out with inspiring volume from the congregation, and from the pulpit was told the "Old, Old Story" of the advent of the "Prince of Peace." To enhance the beauty and inspiration of the service, the choir rendered the Hallelujah Chorus (Swedish Text) from Handel's Messiah. Miss Elvira Norden also sang the beautiful selection, "O, Night Divine!" The Christmas offering to the pastor amounted to $44.35. Toward the close of the service the choir again sang, selecting the triumphant chorus, "Joy to the World, the Lord Has Come!" arr. by Adam Geibel. Christmas, 1914, is now a thing of the past, yet it lingers with us as a very pleasant and hallowed memory.

"Tempus Fugit."

It may not be amiss to linger once more in meditation upon the event we have recently celebrated, the passing of the old year and the entering in upon the new year. True, we, some of us at least, have celebrated such an event so many times already that it has, perhaps, come to be quite a commonplace occurrence.

As the traveler, when he essays upon his journey, finds it a pleasure to note, and even to count, the mile posts along the way, but after a time grows weary of it, especially when he finds that the train is passing at such a rate of speed that it is almost impossible to mark the different stadii, for which reason he gives it up and notices only the more striking and interesting features, or lets his mind dwell upon the destination towards which he is hurrying:

so do we, perhaps, as sojourners through life, find it too commonplace to mark the mile posts that we pass. The distance between them, moreover, seems so short that they occur entirely too often; especially if we have reached or passed the "meridian" of life. Then the mile posts seem to speed by with an ever increasing rapidity, and we would rather not notice them, nor even meditate upon our destination. We wish that we were back at the starting point again. "Backward, turn backward, O time in your flight!" is the burden of our song. Or, that being impossible, we would at least linger indefinitely just where we are, living only in and for the present, without one thought of the future.

Such an attitude would, however, be unworthy of us as Christians, and it would not help us to forget the fact that we are here only for a brief period, and are hastening on toward our eternal home.

Let the world busy themselves with their wild attempt to forget the flight of time, and the fact that they are hurrying on toward eternity; as Christians it behooves us not so to do.

We have entered in upon a new year. Its days lie before us for us to make or to mar with our words and deeds. Or, to use another illustration, the days lie before us as so many pages of an unwritten tablet. How shall those pages be filled? Shall we fill them with letters that spell faith and hope and charity and love and service in our Master's footsteps, which will mean to us joy, and peace, and salvation? Or shall we write upon them with pen dipped in the black filthy ink of worldliness letters that spell unbelief, spiritual slothfulness, envy, malice, moral decadence and riotous living; which will bring to us sorrow and remorse and at the end of the years eternal death? The time to consider these things is *now,* for *"tempus fugit."*

How shall we fill this "tabula rasa," as the ancient philosophers call it, this empty tablet that the new year has placed before us? May we fill it, friends, with words and deeds that will do us credit as "Children of Light."

To do so is no easy task. Life has its great responsibilities and demands upon us. Even to fill our place as a good citizen is no easy matter in these days of political chaos, industrial depression, and moral decadence. "These are, indeed, the times that try men's souls." And then our spiritual responsibilities! To be on our guard, with eternal vigilance against the spirit of anti-Christ which is everywhere asserting itself! What shall we do? How shall we meet these requirements? Our own strength is insufficient. But one of our sacred writers has given us a solution to the problem, when he most beautifully says: (Ps. 121:1.) "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

Those words were spoken from the viewpoint of the traveler through the plains of Babylonia and Mesopotamia. He was wont to lift up his eyes toward the hills of Zion, the mountains of Jerusalem, which were outlined in the distance, and thus gain courage and strength. Now we are traveling through a wilderness, "a vale of tears," for so our sojourn here on earth has been described. May we then lift up our eyes unto the "Hills Celestial," the "Delectable Mountains of the New Jerusalem," and we shall be refreshed and strengthened on our way. We shall then be able to meet every difficulty with a courage that brings victory.

Therefore, as *"tempus fugit,"* "we will lift up our eyes unto the *Hills* from whence cometh our help."

Go to Church Sunday.

We wish to announce to the readers of the Messenger that *next* Sunday is Go to Church Sunday in our church. You say: "That's just what we thought; the pastor has been asleep and has gotten behind time. That announcement should have been made a week ago, for "G. T. C." Sunday was Feb. 14." We are not asleep, dear reader. We were fully aware of the fact that Sunday the 14th was "G. T. C." Sunday, and that is was so announced with con-

siderable acclaim in many of the churches of our city. We did not announce it then, for the reason that we are not in sympathy with the idea. We of the Lutheran Church do not encourage our people to make a specialty of going to church just one Sunday of the year. We believe and teach that *every* Sunday is "Go to Church Sunday" for everybody who is not ill or otherwise unavoidably detained at home.

"But," you say, "the idea does not imply that people should go only on that one day." Be that as it may; that is, nevertheless, the way it will work out.

The idea, we suppose, is to stir those who seldom, if ever, visit the Lord's House, and the lukewarm, who attend occasionally. To interest those in attending church more regularly. This, we suppose, is the idea of the movement. But it will not accomplish that, for don't you see the very *name,* "Go to Church Sunday," is a contradiction to *regular* church attendance? The lukewarm, and those who never, or very seldom, at least, attend church, will conclude that by making a specialty of going to church on that particular day, which has been loudly proclaimed as "Go to Church Sunday," they have, thereby, "fulfilled all righteousness" for the rest of the year. That is the way the idea inevitably will work out, for it is in its very name and spirit a *contradiction* to *regular* and *faithful* attendance.

"But," you say, "how shall we understand, then, the announcement in these columns that 'Go to Church Sunday' in our church is 'next Sunday?' Is not that setting aside one particular day?"

We mean simply this: that so it is *always* with us. Whenever we look ahead to *any* Sunday, *whatsoever,* during the *entire year,* we think of it as *"Go to Church Sunday."* Therefore, we can at *all times* say among ourselves and also announce to the public: *"Next* Sunday, i. e., every Sunday, is *"Go to Church Sunday"* in *our* church.

May every member of our congregation make it that for the rest of the year.

Messages from Gethsemane.

(*Extract from sermon Sunday evening, March 7.*)

This is the theme that we wish to present for your consideration to-night. Do you hesitate? Do you shrink back at the proposition, the prospect of being reminded of Gethsemane? Does the very word itself bring pain to your heart? As a rule it is thus. We shudder at the thought of Gethsemane. We do not like to listen to messages from thence, for it throws a veil of gloom about us; it reminds us of sorrow and suffering in the very highest degree. And that we do not relish. We would be happy and gay with no sorrows and sufferings enveloping our path. We would go about our way and pass our time in everlasting sunshine. Thus we would have it if we could but choose. Particularly is this true of the world. They would not be disturbed in their mad rush after pleasures, in their life of gayety and frivolity; they would not be disturbed, no, not for one moment, by the thought of Gethsemane and its memories of sorrow and suffering. O, what pity it is that humanity should be so shortsighted, so utterly blinded by the dazzling things of this world, that they cannot see the purpose of Gethsemane: Its necessity for us; its fostering, developing, and refining influence upon our lives, and its possibilities for true and eternal happiness!

In view of this inability on the part of the majority to realize the great purpose of Gethsemane, we are constrained to say with the inspired writer:

"God pity those who cannot say 'Not mine, but Thine;' who only pray, 'Let this cup pass,' and cannot see 'The purpose of Gethsemane.'"

But it is to be hoped, dear friends, that those present here to-night are not averse to the consideration of the topic proposed.

Then, too, let us remember that Gethsemane was a beautiful place—a garden where trees and flowers and fruits grew in abundance; a place that offered rest and comfort and inspiration, and where people ordinarily loved to come. Jesus had often with His disciples gone there to

be refreshed after a day of weary toil. And right here, in that fact, is a message, or lesson, for us. So it is with our days and the experiences that make up the sum total of our lives: in the main they are bright, cheerful and inspiring, carrying with them so many good and beautiful things that give joy and comfort; now and then a cloud of sorrow o'ershadows our path, and suffering lays its heavy hand upon us. But shall we resent that? Shall we cry, like a spoiled child, for only the sweet things, disdaining that which tends to sober us and bring us face to face with the sombre realities of life? No, may we as readily receive the one as the other, realizing the inestimable value of even those things which are distasteful to the flesh, and that they have a power, higher even than the good and sweet things of life, for purifying and refining the soul, and bringing out the best there is in us.

But let us take a look at the Scriptural passage before us. (First paragraph of the II. Part of the Passion History.) It was in the night of the Passover. The supper was finished, and Jesus with the eleven apostles had passed over the vale of Kidron and into Gethsemane. We find Him here separated a little from the disciples that He might be alone with the great sorrow that was now bearing down upon Him in all its terrible significance. Yes, we find Him *alone*. He had purposely left the disciples some distance that He alone might face and bear the awful agony. For so it was ordained by the Father that the Son should, alone, as the Pascal Lamb, bear the sins of the world. And why should others be present? None but He, not even His disciples, could fully comprehend the meaning of the hour. And even if they could have fathomed it and the depths of His suffering, they could not have shared it, nor taken it from Him. That hour with its agonies called for powers above those that are human; powers that are divine and infinite.

So we find Him there bearing the sorrows in solitude, and the prophecy is fulfilled which declared of Him: "He has trod the winepress alone." His agonies increase. His

soul is sorrowful unto death, and He prays: "Father, if it be possible, take away this cup from me; nevertheless not what I will, but as Thou wilt."

We possibly wonder how He could suffer so greatly, even knowing what was to come. We perhaps think that He who was the Son of God should have been able to bear all that without any grief. We forget that He was also human: true man as well as true God. In fact, this shows how *truly human* He was. And had He not at all times been that? We know that He had often under His labors become weary, and an hungered, and athirst. He was like unto us in all things, yet without sin. It was necessary for Him to be truly human, in order to come close to humanity; to partake of their experiences of both joy and sorrow, and to be able to sympathize with them and offer His help in the time of their troubles. Praise be to God that He came so close to us! We are thereby assured that He knows our condition: our weaknesses and our woes, and has a listening, sympathizing ear for us in all our troubles.

So it was necessary for Him to be truly human and able to suffer even here in this hour of deepest sorrow and affliction. As Mediator and Redeemer He must needs taste and endure the bitterness of a world of sin. If He had not, He would not have been our Saviour. Our sins would not have been atoned for, because their atonement did require the suffering of the penalty, and that was nothing less than death. Therefore we read that "His soul was sorrowful unto death."

O, though the thought of the terrible agony of our Saviour fills our hearts with grief; yet, may we rejoice for our own sake: for through the soul-rending sufferings that He endured, our souls are set free from sin and death. That is, then, one of the main "messages to us from Gethsemane": a message of sorrow it is true, on the part of our Saviour, but a message of great joy, yea, infinite joy for us; a message of salvation through the sufferings of our Redeemer. Here are the words of the Prophet Isaiah fulfilled: "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our

sorrows: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

What do you think of that message, dear friend? Is it acceptable to you? Will you receive it in a truly thankful heart and let that be your greatest source of joy and comfort throughout your life? Will you say with the writer of sacred song:

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I'll sing Thy power to save,
When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave."

But there is another "message from Gethsemane" for us; one that comes direct from the lips of our Saviour, and has a bearing upon our attitude in regard to the dangers and temptations that surround us. The message is this: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Jesus spoke those words to His disciples. He knew what a severe test their faith and love, and loyalty and courage would presently be subjected to, when His enemies would lead Him away to be condemned to death. He knew how severely their faith, and loyalty, and courage would then be tested, and that if they were not forewarned, nor heeded that warning, they would fall into temptations. And we know what did take place: How Peter, the otherwise brave and undaunted Peter, in an unguarded moment fell, and denied his Master. So we see the necessity of that solemn warning: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."

But, friends, those words are also for us! That is one of the important "messages from Gethsemane" for *us today*. O, how we have need of watchfulness and prayer! What temptations do not lurk in the pathway of every one! How is not our way fraught with danger at every step! "The devil goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." Or again he comes in the guise of an angel

of light; or a friend, who offers us so many opportunities to enjoy our life and make it so "pleasant" if we but follow him on the broad, glittering, dazzling way of the world. And, O, how many have not fallen before such temptations! How many of our young people, for instance, have not gradually been led to desert the church, the Sunday-school, and all Christian associations; and to forget their sacred vows, because they have not been on their guard, and have not remained constant in watchfulness and prayer? So, friends, do not scorn this message from Gethsemane that comes from the lips of your Saviour: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."

One more message before we close: We read of our Saviour that in the hour of His deepest agony, when He prayed His heavenly Father to let the cup of bitterness and sorrow pass from Him, He added: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." That, also, is a message for us. Our lives will not always run along smoothly; we will not ever walk on the flowery beds of ease. There will be moments of sorrow and suffering; trials and tribulations will often make our burden heavy to bear; afflictions will o'ertake us; misfortune will knock at our door. May we then through it all be willing to say with our blessed Redeemer: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt," realizing that in it all there is some great, divine purpose, hidden from our eyes *now,* beyond our power to comprehend *at the present,* but which in the *Hereafter,* in that *Better Day,* when the shadows of Gethsemane shall be lifted and the glory of the Lord shines round about us, we shall see clearly and shall know even as we are known. So may we realize, in our own life, the purpose of Gethsemane, and with our Saviour say: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

A summer land of singing mirth,
Where souls are glad and hearts are light,
And not a shadow lurks in sight,
We do not know it, but there lies
Veiled somewhere under evening skies
A garden which we all must see—
The garden of Gethsemane.

With joyous steps we go our way,
Love lends a halo to our days;
Light sorrows sail like clouds afar,
We laugh, and say how strong we are.
We hurry on; and, hurrying, go
Close to the border-land of woe,
That waits for you, and waits for me,
Forever waits Gethsemane.

Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,
Bridged over by our broken dreams;
Behind the misty caps of years,
Beyond the great salt fount of tears,
The garden lies. Strive as you may,
You can not miss it on your way,
All paths that have been, or shall be,
Pass somewhere through Gethsemane.

All those who journey, soon or late,
Must pass within the garden's gate;
Must kneel alone in darkness there,
And battle with some fierce despair.
God pity those who can not say,
"Not mine, but Thine," who only pray,
"Let this cup pass," and can not see
The purpose in Gethsemane.

An After-Thought.

The beautiful Easter season with its message of hope and life and salvation is past. We pause to ask: What did it bring to us? What did the coming and passing of Easter mean to us, and do for us? That depends upon the state of our hearts. If our hearts were open to the glorious Easter message, then we have now risen with Christ, risen out of our former lethargy and spiritual slothfulness to a more earnest seeking of the things above, and a more consecrated service in our Master's footsteps; we are walking in the *"newness of life"*.

But if our hearts were engrossed in the material things of this temporal life: our business affairs, the thought of what we shall eat and drink and clothe ourselves with, and the ever accelerating chase after the "mighty dollar"—if

our hearts were thus occupied, then Easter with all its glorious significance did not mean much to us. It was then only an ordinary day, which we were wishing would quickly pass so that we might plunge again, on Monday morning, into the mad rush for the lucre of this world.

You have all heard the story of the man who was so engrossed with the turning over of the clods and the sods in his field that he always had his face turned downward, and could not see the crown that the angels from above were offering him if he would but *look up* and *rise up* out of the dust. But it was all in vain. He lost the crown because he would not look up. His poor heart was rapt up in the *soil* of his earthly possessions. Friends, let us not make the same awful mistake. Let us not be "clodhoppers", groveling always in the dust, the material things of this world. Let us shake off the shackles that mammon is forging around us, and pray the Lord for grace to look up and rise up; to elevate our vision somewhat above the angle of the clods that constitute our earthly possessions; to see and to seek the things which are above, which are eternal, and which alone can satisfy the soul.

"Chautauqua Season" Opens.

Male Quartet Returns from Initial Trip Covered with Laurels, and Flushed with Spirit of Achievement.

Those who smiled at our announcement in the former issue of the MESSENGER that when the balmy breezes of spring were here the gallant boys of the male quartet would take up the trail along the Chautauqua circuit, have now settled down to a realization of the fact that the joke is on themselves; for the prediction has now had its consummation, and a more encouraging fulfillment than the boys themselves even had dared to hope.

With the benign consent of our readers, we will take them along on a reminiscent review of our "trip of triumph" through the heart of the Ozarks. Your humble scribe had been asked to fill the pulpit of the Lutheran Church at Swedeborg, Mo., on Sunday, the 11th. Now the

people of Swedeborg do not have services regularly, there being no local pastor. Nor do they have the chance, at least not very often, to hear a concert. So we conceived the idea that here was an opportunity to bring the male quartet along and give them a "try-out" as to what they could do upon the platform away from home; and this would serve, also, as a sort of a "spring series" to the coming "Chautauqua Season." Also, we made bold to hope that our program would be appreciated by our friends of Swedeborg, and that we could thus give them a real festive day that would somewhat offset the monotony of the lack of Sunday services.

Accordingly, when the "Ozark Limited" left Union Station Saturday evening, we found our boys aboard full of anticipation of what experiences might be in store for them on this their first trip of its kind.

As the train rolled along rounding the bends of the Meramec, out through Meramec Highlands, Valley Park, Pacific, etc., their spirits rose and their voices rang out lustily:

Merrily we roll along,
Roll along, roll along,
Merrily we roll along,
Over the Frisco Line,

much to the delight of the fellow passengers, who called for encores. By the time we had given them "Sjung om Studentens lyckliga dag" and "Vårt land," the charmed audience began to inquire as to whether we were not descendants of the famous Arpi singers who carried off the laurels at the great "concours universel" at Paris in 1867.

It was now about the midnight hour, and the train was tearing along past the cliffs and through the deep valleys of the Ozarks. But nothing daunted the quartet again voiced their sentiments in song, thus:

"Rocked in the cradle of the deep,
I lay me down in peace to sleep."

Our sleep was brief, however, for presently we had arrived almost at our destination, and so bidding farewell

to our friends of the Ozark Limited, we alighted at Crocker, Mo. This was the first station this side of our destination. Not wishing to arrive at Swedeborg at that time of the night, only two hours past midnight, we decided to stop off at Crocker, until morning, traveling the remaining six miles overland. This would give us the benefit of an early morning in the mountains, and a daylight view of the Ozarks.

At seven o'clock, A. M., with a good breakfast inside our jackets, we started on the last lap of our journey. And right here we pause a moment to introduce our readers to our means-of-conveyance, for that was certainly a thing of *interest* if not of *beauty*. We christened it our "Prairie Schooner", and such, indeed, it was, and one as ancient looking as it has ever been our pleasure to behold. The schooners of historic fame that lumbered along over the old Santa Fe trail in the fifties and sixties could not, after having traversed half the continent, have been more-battered, and weather-beaten, and loose-jointed, than was this one. And our team—well, they were not oxen, but were supposed to represent the genus "equus"; but surely no yoke of oxen could have been slower than they were; nor would it, as to their age and general appearance, have been a very great stretch of imagination to fancy that they had seen service on the stage coach lines of half a century ago. Our chief regret, as we pen this description of our trip, is that we cannot give our readers a half-tone reproduction of that outfit in which we made the last lap of this our long-to-be-remembered "Chautauqua trip." But we had no camera with us; that matter had been overlooked. Had we possessed such an instrument, rest assured this would have been a profusely *illustrated* story. After many a jolt as we lumbered along over the stumps and stones, now climbing the hills and again descending into the valleys of the Ozarks, we finally saw, a half mile ahead, the neat little town of Swedeborg. A little later we made our triumphant entry into the burgh, trying to look as dignified as possible from our perch in the "Prairie Schooner".

The good people of Swedeborg were glad to see us, and received us with open arms.

The forenoon session was given to divine services, with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The quartet rendered two numbers, appropriate to the occasion. The tokens of appreciation among the audience were unmistakable, and when we announced that in the evening we would give them a *"song service"*, with a full and varied musical program, we could tell from the expression of pleasure on every face that we would have a large and appreciative audience.

Of our ride, after the services, out to Polson's, one of the enterprising families of Swedeborg, who live two miles out from the town; our cordial reception at their home;

THE MALE QUARTET.
Top Row, Left to Right: Lawrence Nelson, A. N. Engberg.
Bottom Row, Left to Right: C. J. Segerhammar, Romeo Anderson.

the bounteous dinner that was spread for us, with spring chicken and fresh, home-grown vegetables and fruits, etc., that you get only in the country; our inspection, after dinner, of Mr. Polson's farm, which he with his four sturdy boys is rapidly developing into one of the finest and most up-to-date farms of that section of the country, there would be much to say. But we must hurry on with our narrative.

Returning to Swedeborg in the afternoon, an hour was spent in rehearsing our evening's program. We had secured the assistance of Miss Lillian Black as accompanist. Miss Black is a former student at the Lebanon, Mo., Normal College, but now holds the position of assistant cashier of the Swedeborg Bank. The rehearsal proceeded without incident until we had reached the violin solo—we stop here to relate what happened. Now we have all heard how Caesar on his famous conquests, when "Omnis Gallia in partes tres divisa est", was wont to burn the bridges behind him. So far we had destroyed no bridges; but it remained for Lawrence, our violinist, to do the "bridge-destroying" act, which was accomplished by all but annihilating the bridge of Miss Black's violin. Considering the "inspiration of the moment", however, this extra little episode was excused, and Lawrence proved himself a more gallant hero than Caesar, for he promised to replace the bridge, which was more than our friend Caesar ever did.

The rest of the afternoon was spent in the cozy little cottage of Mrs. Cecilia Nelson, whose home is the pleasant and hospitable rendezvous of all who visit Swedeborg.

The hour had arrived for our evening program, and to our delight we found the church well filled. Had the visit of the quartet been announced a few days previous, it is safe to say that the full capacity of the house would not have been sufficient to accommodate all.

We will not go into detail in describing the program, which consisted of eleven numbers in all. Suffice it to say that the cordial hand-shakes, and thanks, and congratulations, which we received from every one at the conclusion of the service, gave ample proof of the fact that our pro-

gram had been more than well received. We couldn't but feel, consequently, that we had carried the day, and again our thoughts went back to our friend Caesar, who characterized his triumphs thus: "Veni vidi vici", "I came, I saw, I conquered".

We were told that a small cyclone had passed in the vicinity of the town on the Friday evening before, and we saw some of its effects. And now we were assured by our kind friends that we, likewise, had taken Swedeborg by *"storm"*—however, in a gentler manner, which had carried with it not loss but great gain.

As our story is already quite extended we refrain from describing our homeward journey. It remains only to add a word of sincere appreciation and gratitude to the people of Swedeborg for the very cordial manner in which we were received, and the innumerable words and deeds of kindness that were showered upon us.

Freedom of Choice and the Responsibility that Goes with It.

Recent events, particularly the fate of that Monster of the Sea, the Lusitania, give rise, unsought, to a few reflections upon this subject. We pride ourselves upon the fact that we live in the "Land of the Free," and surely freedom is a gift that cannot be too highly priced. When we consider those who in times past have groaned under the bonds of slavery, who have been held fast in the shackles of despotism and tyranny in one form or another, we cannot value too highly the privileges of Liberty, which here in our country constitute our birthright; freedom of thought; freedom of public utterance from the platform and in the press; freedom of conscience in matters religious, etc. But do we consider as we ought the great responsibility this freedom places upon us; the necessity of thinking rightly, acting rightly, choosing rightly, in matters of gravest significance? Often we find people in the most deplorable manner abusing these very blessings: the privi-

leges of Liberty; abusing them in a manner which brings woe upon themselves and their fellowmen, which in many instances can never be remedied.

Numerable examples could be given to bear out this statement, if space would allow.

It was particularly *freedom of choice* and its attendant responsibilities that we had in mind. Let us give one or two illustrations. The Lusitania was sailing from New York to Liverpool, England. A state of intense warfare prevails between Germany and England, even upon the seas, and particularly in the waters through which this vessel would have to pass. Now Germany had repeatedly warned those who were contemplating taking passage upon the ship not to do so. England, on the other hand, assured them that all would be well; that no harm could come to the great liner. Every individual was fully aware, however, of the situation, and the danger with which this voyage was fraught. They had the freedom of choice between safety on the one hand and the greatest possible danger on the other. Had they chosen to remain here, all would have been safe. They smiled at the danger, however, and chose to sail, and—we know the result. And it is not only the lamentable loss of so many American lives that this misuse of the freedom of choice brought about, but also the very near possibility of plunging this whole nation into the war. Here is an instance, therefore, and a very deplorable one, where people did not appreciate *the awful responsibility attendant upon the freedom of choice.*

Let us mention one other instance which is of infinitely greater importance, even, than the one above. In matters spiritual, those that pertain to the eternal welfare of the soul, we also have *freedom of choice.* God has given to every individual a free will and the right to choose for himself between safety and danger, life and death. He thrusts salvation upon no one who is unwilling to accept it. Now we know that this world is fraught with great dangers; that there are powers and influences at work that carry with them destruction more sure and deadly than

that of any submarine, dreadnaught, mine, or "infernal machine;" eternal destruction of the soul. The word of God warns us to shun such influences; to flee from them as we would from a deadly pestilence or from the mouth of a cannon. The spiritual enemies, on the other hand, tell us not to fear. "There is no danger." The journey along the highway of sin will only be *"one grand pleasure trip."* There we stand with the situation clearly before us, and those two voices calling. Also, we have the *freedom of choice.* But O, the solemn responsibility that freedom carries with it! And what shall we say of those who make light of such dangers, and, setting aside all warnings of the word of God and of friends who seek their eternal welfare, choose to embark upon the high seas of sin? Like the Lusitania they will go *"down;"* however, not into the depths of the Atlantic, but into the *awful abyss* of *eternal death.* And it will not tend to lessen their woes to remember that, knowing the situation beforehand, and having been warned repeatedly, they went down to their lamentable fate from their *own choice.* We say again therefore: O, the solemn responsibility of the freedom of choice!

In Memoriam.

Carl Joseph Segerhammar, Jr.

February 24, 1913—April 23, 1915.

A little ray of sunshine, ah, how bright,
That filled our home with light and joy supreme;
A little flower that blossomed, ah, how fair,
With fragrance ever pure, and fresh and sweet—
And art thou gone so soon from out our midst?

Is the light fled, and done thy little day?
Is the flower withered, e'en before half-blown?
The clear, sweet voice, that here within these walls
Once rang with songs and laughter, pure as day—
Is that voice hushed, and broke the silver chords?

In vain we listen; all is still, *so still,*
There is no answer as there used to be,
When we were wont to call thee to come near.

The patter of thy footsteps, sounds so sweet,
Within these halls will nevermore be heard.

Yes, thou'rt removed, from earthly scenes removed
To where no shadows e'er obscure the light,
No hand of death e'er blights the flowers that grow
Beside the waters of that Living Stream,
Which floweth, clear as crystal, from God's Throne.

Yes, thou art gone before—soon we'll embark
Upon our voyage o'er the unknown sea,
That lieth cold and sullen, dark and drear,
Betwixt our present and eternal home.
Soon we'll embark—It cannot be too soon.

And, O, the joy, to know thou'rt gone before,
To lead the way! *We* tried to lead *thee here,*
And *now, thou* leadest *us.* Aye, be it so!
"A little child shall lead them"—Lead thou on!
We'll follow thee.

On the Threshold of Eternity.

We cull this subject from an extract of a late publication by the noted Swedish scientist, Sven Hedin. In a description of the conditions prevailing along the battle fronts of the present European conflict, of which conditions he has recently been an eye-witness and close student, Hedin sums up the effect of the war on the religious tenets of the soldiers in the following striking and noteworthy sentence: "The battle fields of Europe are a poor soil for the propagation of infidelism; the seriousness of life there is too real, and the step too short to the threshold of eternity." Those are words, indeed, not ill spoken. But when we reflect upon them and also upon the situation in some of those countries, prior to the outbreak of this war, which situation was characterized by a general and appalling decline in religion and morality and a corresponding growth of infidelism and worldliness, we cannot but say: What a pity that an international calamity such as this present war, unprecedented as it is in the annals of the nations, craving an average daily sacrifice of 30,000 killed and

wounded, and an average daily expense of $70,000,000, while millions of people must soon be approaching the point of starvation—what a *pity, that such a calamity should be necessary to bring the people to a realization of the fact that life is serious, and that the step is short to the portals of eternity!* And yet, it is assuredly better that the peoples over there should wake up to that realization, *even at such an awful cost,* than to have drifted along as before in spiritual blindness and heedless of those solemn truths.

But here is a solemn warning to us, the citizens of this fair land, where the blessings of the Christian faith are so numerous and so easy of access. May we see the *"Handwriting on the Wall",* and interpret it correctly, before it is too late! O, that we were able to say of fair America *now,* before that day has come when its soil is moistened, as in Europe, with the blood of its best citizens —that we were able to say *now: "America is a poor soil for ungodliness!"*

And as to life, is it not serious enough to every one of us, if we but stop to reflect? Is there any one among us very far removed from the "Great Beyond"? It's but a step, and a short step at that. Perhaps you are even now *"on the threshold of eternity."* You may be in the prime of your years, your health and strength; you may just now be approaching, with buoyant steps, the highest pinnacle of your life's ambition—That's to-day. To-morrow those steps are less buoyant, for by that power, over which you have no control, you are being led *"whither thou wilt not,"* and before to-morrow's sun is set the gates of eternity may have opened to receive you.

Even if there should yet be another score of years before us, how quickly do they pass! You need only look back some twenty years in your past life to realize the flight of time. Whither have those years flown? Like "a swift fleeting meteor, a fast flying cloud," they have passed away.

O, may we then "purchase the time," and see to it that our own hearts may be *no soil for ungodliness;* for life

is serious enough to each of us, and the step so short to *"the threshold of eternity!"*

Patriotic Address.

(Given Sunday Evening, July 4.)
Published by Request.

Since our great National Holiday occurs this year on Sunday, it is only meet and proper that we should in connection with our services in some measure take cognizance of the fact, and in some simple yet sincere manner celebrate the day: a day which commemorates an event far-reaching, indeed, in its immediate effect, and none the less farreaching in its subsequent beneficient possibilities for all concerned; an event, we can truthfully say, which, as to its importance, is second to none among the great events of modern history, the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, by which the thirteen original, Federated Colonies along the Atlantic seaboard became a free and independent nation.

The wisdom of those Patriotic Fathers who drew up that document, the Declaration of Independence, and who brought about that important and farreaching event, the separation of the colonies from England, has been proven more and more conclusively for each succeeding year and decade that has come and gone since the Liberty Bell with its iron tongue rang out across this continent the sacred sentiments of Freedom.

Liberty is a God given heritage to which every human being, regardless of race, color, or present circumstance of position, has an equal right. And since this country has been enjoying during these 139 years, and is enjoying today, the blessings of Liberty, it is meet that we should on this Sabbath, which occurs on the 4th of July, remember the event that made those blessings possible to us.

There is a close relationship between Church and Country, Religion and Patriotism. Not that we believe, as some people do, that the Church should interfere with

and dominate the affairs of State. No, that erroneous idea was exploded centuries ago by the illustrious Dr. Martin Luther and the Reformation which he brought about, for the principles of which our German and Swedish forefathers laid down their lives. And may we see to it that we keep inviolate the fruitage of their labors and sacrifices.

No, Church and State are separate institutions, and should in the main be kept separate as to their fields of activities. And yet, they should go hand in hand as two mighty, distinct, yet friendly and harmonious factors for the welfare of the human race. In fact, there are three institutions which are fundamental to the welfare of human society: the Home, the Church, and the State. Remove one, or take away the salutary influence of one of them, and the others will inevitably suffer.

So let us call forth to-day, in this simple, humble manner, a few expressions of the patriotism which should abide, and does abide, in the hearts of us all.

This country has a peculiar position and a peculiar calling among the nations of the world. It is still, after these 139 years, in its formative period. It is being shaped and fashioned and developed, and that so rapidly that we can scarcely realize it. And in this process of shaping and developing, the God of Nations has put into our hands a wonderful material. Here, within the borders of this country are blended together the qualities of the various races of mankind. Here are welded together the traits and characteristics, the knowledge and wisdom, the ideas, the hopes, the aspirations, and, yea, the blood, the brawn and brain, of the peoples of the earth. What will be the final result, the ultimate product of it all? Only the future can tell; it lies beyond the ability of even the most sagacious and farseeing now to predict. But that it will be something great, above even the most sanguine expectations, it is safe to say: that is, if we use aright our opportunities; if we are truly awake to the possibilities that the Great Ruler of Nations has put into our hands.

This is, as we have said, a cosmopolitan country. To

its shores have come during the decades that have come and gone peoples from all the corners of the earth, and here at the Forge of Life and on one common Anvil of Opportunity, they are smiting out their destiny as a united people, and the sparks from that anvil are lighting up the world. With so many nationalities here represented, and with each of them bringing to their life's task the best there is in them; and, moreover, with well nigh unlimited natural resources at their disposal, is there any measuring of what this nation may yet be?

However, all these peculiar advantages and opportunities which we here enjoy, might be unavailing if they are not used rightly; if we do not let the author of all good things put into our hearts the wisdom and courage to act our part as we should. And to insure the good results of our activities as citizens of this cosmopolitan country, it is absolutely imperative that the various peoples and races who have here been so wondrously intermingled should live and work together in peace and harmony, "with malice toward none, with charity for all;" for "a house divided against itself cannot stand." We have already had occasion to test the truth of that divine saying, as in the dark days of the Rebellion. But thanks be to Him who is the "Prince of Peace," harmony and unity were restored, the breaches were cemented together, the wounds were healed, and the country continued to stand not divided, but united. Shall it thus remain?

That is for the present generation to say. The future of this great country is for us who are now celebrating this day to make or to mar, God forbid that we mar it!

But it is only natural that where so many different peoples and nationalities are represented there are also differences of opinion, even as to things which are quite vital to the welfare of the nation. If these differences are allowed to take on the nature of petty jealousies and personal animosities, a dangerous blow has already been dealt the very foundations upon which our Government is built. For the principles laid down by our Patriot Fathers, upon

which this Government was to be reared, were these: "All men are created equal and have been endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But there seems to be, even in our day, a tendency among some of our citizens to drift away from that fundamental principle. And so they make classifications, and attach to some of their neighbors certain appellations and designations which carry with them the idea of inferiority and consequently a subordinated position.

Thus we hear so often the misnomer "foreigners" attached to those whose ancestry can be traced perchance to the sturdy Vikings of the North, or the equally sturdy Teutonic peoples of Central Europe. And because we are able to speak more than one language and have transplanted in this Land of our Adoption qualities and characteristics brought over from the Fatherland, we are even branded as un-American. Just as though it were a crime to know more than one language. Does the fact that some of us speak in two or more different tongues make us less desirable citizens of any country? Or does the fact that we have assimilated and incorporated into the sum-total of our culture the beautiful gems of language and literature, of history, of the arts and sciences of other countries make us less able to act our part as Americans? The idea is ridiculous. Should we not, on the other hand, if we wish to render our country a great service, make it a point to assimilate as *much as possible of culture* and of *knowledge* and *wisdom?* And if in so doing we acquire another language or two, *so much the better.* There is no danger that any of us become too deeply learned or too highly cultured; for as the poet has said:

> "A little learning is a dangerous thing,
> Drink deep or touch not the Pierian spring."

Let us illustrate: If I study only one subject, I am apt to become very one-sided. I am apt to become a man with only one thought and one idea. But if I study some forty or fifty subjects, with their subdivisions and side

branches, as are offered in a modern college curriculum, I am apt to have a broader view of life, a better judgment of the things that be, and consequently, more ability to act my part as a citizen. Now all do not have opportunity for such extended study, and we have not said that a person can not be a worthy citizen without it. But what we do say is this: Let the citizens who have acquired the language and learning of only *one* country get above that narrow-minded idea of looking askance at, and branding as un-American, those of their neighbors who chance to be versed in the language and learning of *other countries* as well.

Then let us read history a little better than we have done. And if we have not the time to read the histories of other countries, let us at least read our own history more thoroughly, and see what we owe to some of those who were countrymen of the citizens that are now being called "foreigners" and "un-American." If we go back to the Revolutionary period, that critical period in our country's history, we find as bright stars on the firmament the names of such men as Lafayette and Baron von Steuben. Could anyone have rendered more effective and illustrious service to the cause of this nation than they did?

Then let us take a look at what has been done for this country by men who hail from the far North, sons of the Vikings, the "Terrible Swedes."

In 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was being drawn up by the Patriot Fathers who constituted the Continental Congress, we find among them a Swede, John Morton, from the state of Pennsylvania, one of the ablest debaters, and, in general, a most zealous champion of the great cause that was at stake.

Having with his decisive vote put his own state on the list of free colonies, he, with the same undaunted patriotism, signed the Declaration of Independence, the adoption of which, on July 4, 1776, marked the birth of a new and independent nation. He also took a leading part in the framing of the Articles of Confederation, which

served as the instrument of Government until the adoption of the Constitution, 1789. His death in 1777 ended his illustrious and highly useful career.

This brings to mind another little bit of history to the effect that another of our "Johns" was the *first President* of the United States, during the critical period of Colonial Confederation. He was John Hanson, born of Swedish parents in Charles County, Maryland, 1715. His ancestors came over from Sweden in August, 1642, joining the Swedish Colony on the banks of the Delaware, founded by the Swedish Chancellor, Oxenstiern, in 1638.

Hanson was to a great extent instrumental in bringing about the adoption of the Articles of Confederation, which he signed in behalf of his state. This state had refused to ratify the articles on account of existing conditions relating to the disposal of the land that lay between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi. When this matter, in March, 1781, had been satisfactorily adjusted, Maryland acquiesced, and Hanson signed, *thereby making possible the adoption of the articles, and thereby, also, laying the cornerstone to the foundation upon which the subsequently adopted Constitution of the United States rests.*

In the *Journal of Congress* for November 5, 1781, we read that "John Hanson was on that day elected President of the United States in Congress assembled."

In the various text-books of American history, the beginning of our nation, as such, is generally reckoned from the adoption of the Constitution in 1789, and George Washington is called the first President. But in the light of the above historical facts, would it not be more correct to date the beginning of the United States, as an independent nation, from the *adoption of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, and consequently to designate John Hanson the first President,* who, as stated above, on November 5, 1781, eight years prior to the inauguration of Washington, was declared elected *"President of the United States in Congress assembled"?*

At a later crucial period in the history of our country,

when internal discord on the question of slavery during many years had pitted brother against brother in bitter strife, and when the War of Rebellion had finally broken out, with success for a time smiling upon the side of those who, if ultimately successful, would have caused the disruption of the Union, another Swede equal to the emergency, came to the rescue. It was "John" Ericson, who, by his little *Monitor,* on the 8th of March, 1862, not only *saved the day for the Union,* but through that invention *revolutionized naval warfare,* and made the United States, for a time, the *greatest naval power in the world.*

And how about our present-day Swedish Americans? Are they not still found in the ranks, and often at the head, of those who strive for the principles through which this may continue to be "the home of the brave," and our Government a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people?"

We find them, these descendants of the Vikings, in state assemblies, in governor's chairs, and in the halls of Congress, as well as in the rank and file of loyal American citizens, *now as ever championing the cause of true liberty.*

It is well for us to refresh our memories from time to time on these historical facts, lest in the midst of all jingoism about "Foreigners" and "Hyphenated Americans" we lose our bearings and forget *who's who* in the record of *real service to this country.*

"The Lord of Hosts be with us yet,

Lest we forget, lest we forget,"—not only that little band of Pilgrims who, braving the dangers of the deep, set out in their little vessel for American shores where in homes of their own they could enjoy the blessings of Liberty; but lest we forget, also, that other little band of sturdy pioneers who at the direction of Chancellor Oxenstiern of Sweden in the vessels Kalmar-Nyckel and Gripen sailed across the sea, up the Delaware, on the shores of which they founded a colony in 1638. In many respects and for a long time this was an ideal colony, characterized, on the part of its members, not by greed and self-aggran-

dizement, but by a spirit of altruism, reaching out with their beneficient activities to their neighbors, even the Indians, whom they befriended and rendered assistance, even spiritually, translating portions of the Scriptures and Luther's Small Catechism into the Indian tongue and distributing copies thereof to every wigwam on the banks of the Delaware.

"The Lord of Hosts be with us yet

Lest we forget, lest we forget"—that when the dark cloud of secession hung ominously over this nation, threatening to tear down from our ramparts the Stars and the Stripes, and when the war finally had broken out and the guns of Ft. Sumter began to boom out their doleful sound, the Swedes and the Germans and others who are now called Hyphenated Americans, all over the North, rose up as one man in the defense of the Union, shouldering their muskets and marching off to war, leaving their homes, their families, their friends, their business, their all, and continuing to bear the heat of the day and the brunt of the battle until the Union's victories had been won at Gettysburg and Appomatox.

"The Lord of Hosts be with us yet

Lest we forget, lest we forget"—our solemn duty in this hour of responsibility; our duty to rise up once more as one people, irrespective of whether there flows in our veins Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic blood, and take our stand for truth, and righteousness, and liberty; liberty on land and liberty on the sea; religious liberty, and political liberty, and to see to it that we hold inviolate those principles for which our Patriot Fathers did pledge "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor."

Yes, may we as a people ever be true to those ideas and principles of Freedom for which our forefathers in the old Fatherland and in the new sacrificed their all! The Bible and the Constitution, may that be the foundation upon which we, as an *American* people, will continue to build our future destiny. And may we also, at all times, be on our guard against those powers and influences which

make for oppression and servitude, knowing and remembering that *"eternal vigilance is the price of liberty!"*

The Sunday School Picnic.

Were you at the Annual Picnic? If not, you missed a great deal. It was a day filled with good, wholesome enjoyment, with not a single dull moment from beginning to end. The cares and worries of the daily routine of life had been left behind, and with spirits "free as the air of the mountains," all enjoyed in full measure the beauties and blessings of nature which this summer certainly are magnificent. Then there was the "Field Meet" with its exciting contests, and its splendid opportunities for the younger element to work off some of their superfluous energy. The contest was close between the different "college groups," each being at the final count just one point behind the other, in the following order: Harvard, Yale, Bethany and Augustana. Harvard consequently carried off the cup, but it was no walk-away. The college yells were shouted lustily as the contest swayed to and fro. In this feature Bethany and Augustana "had the edge" on both Harvard and Old Eli. It was too much for your humble scribe to hear again, as in the days of old, the rousing yells of his two alma maters, and without stint he lent whatever volume of voice he possessed in support of Bethany and Augustana. As an extra little attraction there were races for the stout women present. In this event Mrs. A. Cederquist twice carried off the laurels. An attempt was also made to arrange a fat man's race, but though there were several present who could have qualified under the heading of *"fat men"* only one came forward willing to run, namely, our undaunted, loquacious auctioneer, Mr. L. N. Ostrum. The others evidently reasoned that if Mr. Ostrum can *run* as fast as he can *talk,* when he cries our auctions, there was absolutely no chance for the rest of them, and so Ostrum remained unchallenged.

In mentioning the various enjoyments our picnic of-

SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC GROUP.

This picture was taken 1907. Not having a more recent one, we make it answer.

fered, we must not forget the banquet, spread on the velvety greensward. What if the salads, and pies, and cakes, and desserts, et. al., were shared by the flies, and mosquitoes, and ants, and other beetles? At an occasion like that your heart expands in generosity, even to the including of the beasts of the field.

The list of enjoyments would not be complete without mentioning the "aquatics". In that event we did not participate, not being eligible. It remained for our gallant young swains with manly strokes to wield the oars out across the deep, which they did to the great delight of their fair companions. In summing up, be it said, that the picnic this year was all that could be desired and left many pleasant memories.

The District Luther League Convention.

The convention at Mediapolis, Ia., is now a thing of the past, but has left with us a string of pleasant memories. The little incidents en route would make an interesting chapter in itself did space permit a more detailed account.

As the midnight hour drew nigh, the comforts of the Pullman sleeper proved too alluring for five of our group, and so for the remainder of the trip to Burlington the curtain falls, and they disappear from view while they are being carried to the convention "on flow'ry beds of ease". Your humble scribe has long since been hardened to the habits of the night owl, and so from his perch in the day coach he kept watch while the others slumbered and slept. Nor was he left to keep watch alone, for in Arthur Swenson he had a most wide awake and interesting companion. Arriving at Hannibal, the town of Mark Twain fame, the train stopped twenty minutes for midnight lunch. A cup of hot coffee, a sandwich, and a doughnut tasted "awfully" good, notwithstanding the weird hour of the night—— "Burlington, change for Mt. Pleasant, Ottumwa, Chariton, Creston, Red Oak, Council Bluffs, and Omaha; Monmouth, Galesburg, Mendota, Aurora, and Chicago," shouted the

husky porter, and we realized that we had reached the first objective in our itinerary. We alighted and our first concern was for our fellow delegates in the Pullman. Had they overslept? They might have done so but for the faithful watch of the Pullman porter who had routed them out from their peaceful slumbers just in time to don at least the chief parts of their apparel. Presently they emerged still rubbing their drooping eyelids. The "Sleepy Five" was the uncharitable appellation given them by the two "night owls". Our train for Mediapolis would not leave until 7:25, and it was now only 4 o'clock. What was to be done? See the sights of Burlington in the gray dawn of the early morn? Said and done. And having two "night owls" among us, and Burlington being, moreover, a "Hawkeye" town, it was considered a safe enough undertaking e'en though the light was dim. The street cars did not run in Burlington at that unseemly hour of the day; the jitney drivers were, also, all in slumberland, wherefore we proceeded along the "sole-leather route". West Hill was soon reconnoitered. The Messiah church, with its lofty steeple outlined against the hazy sky, was viewed; also the parsonage, where its inmates were rapt in peaceful slumber. Presently we found ourselves in front of the cozy home where our friends, the Benson family, reside. The tramp, tramp, tramp, of this St. Louis army had awakened them and they prevailed upon us to step in and make ourselves at home until train time. Also a bounteous breakfast was served, to which the delegates did more than ample justice, having by their early morning march acquired a keen appetite.

At eight o'clock we arrived at our destination, Mediapolis. As we stood for a moment on the platform, an elderly citizen of the town and member of the church stepped up excitedly and enquired as to whether we were delegates to the convention. On answering in the affirmative he asked: "Is no one here to meet you? Where is our Reception Committee?" And in the twinkling of an eye he was gone in search of that worthy body to remind them of

their duties. It seemed we had stolen a march on them and caught them napping. Anyone wishing to get ahead of St. Louis must be prepared to get up early in the morning. Members of the committee soon appeared; also the local pastor, Rev. Stark, with his new Ford, and in less time than it takes to tell it we had been brought to the church, registered and assigned our places.

We cannot go into detail as to the programs or business sessions. Suffice it to say that St. Louis did their full share, and more, substituting for Burlington in two instances, besides giving the five numbers assigned them. Wish we could publish all the favorable comments we heard upon the numbers given by the St. Louis young folks, but those comments were so many that the MESSENGER would not have space sufficient to contain them. The numbers given by the delegates from the other Leagues were also, in every case, of high order, and we can say without flattering that the Burlington District, as a whole, has reason to be proud of its young people. Between the different sessions entertainment in the form of excursions into the country per automobile had been provided by the chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. Alvin Lund. The Mediapolis League deserves much credit for the splendid manner in which they handled the convention. In this connection we wish to voice our thanks to those, especially, who entertained the members of the St. Louis delegation: Rev. Starks, Lundeens, Bloombergs, Butlers, Freeburgs, Lunds, and Jacksons.

The Doxology of the last session having been sung, and a few words of farewell spoken here and there to the many friends, your scribe wended his way to the station to take (true to his habits of the night owl) a night train back to St. Louis. You say: "How about the other St. Louisans?" The friends of Mediapolis and Burlington would not hear of their leaving so soon, but prevailed upon them to stay over a few days. And so we departed alone, leaving behind us the "Happy Six". As far as Burlington and Keokuk we were not alone, however, but had very pleasant

company in the delegations from those two cities, having the honor in particular to share our seat with the newly elected and popular Vice-president of the District League, Mr. Martin Benson of Burlington, and later with the esteemed secretary of the Keokuk congregation, Mr. Gillis Johnson.——Later: Word comes from Mediapolis to the effect that the "Happy Six" are still there waxing happier every day, and also making themselves useful in various roles somewhat new and strange to them, to-wit: The girls feeding the cats and the chickens; the boys milking the cows and feeding the pigs. Nor do they stop at that, but have taken—so the story runs—complete charge of a threshing outfit, Arthur Swenson as chief engineer, Lawrence Nelson as manipulator of the separator, and Engberg as grand manager of the whole establishment. Such is life in the pleasant country. We are very much worried that the boys on their return to St. Louis will start a "Back to the Farm" movement.

Prosperity!

"Ah," you say, "quit your joking. Don't try our patience by blazing out before us any such headline as that. Don't weary us by asking that we continue further a long since fruitless chase after a phantom so elusive as prosperity. After almost two years of industrial depression and financial stringency, with big business and little business in a condition worse than a standstill, and with the possibility of failure and bankruptcy staring many firms as well as private individuals in the face, it is worse than mockery to prate about prosperity."

Dear reader, granting that there is a great deal of truth in the above argument, yet in the light of our present situation, when viewed from all angles it is somewhat difficult to maintain a position in the ranks of calamity howlers. With millions and yet millions of bushels of wheat and corn and oats and barley just harvested, or about to be harvested, and put upon the market at good prices;

with the railroads showing increased activities getting ready to move these crops; with the wheels of industry along other lines putting on a merry hum, some of the factories and wholesale houses already working overtime; and with the happy news, moreover, just received, that millions of dollars worth of our commerce tied up all summer over there in Holland and otherwheres is about to be released by the benign grace of John Bull, the wolf of want and famine is retreating deep into the jungles whence he came. Uncle Sam is laughing up his sleeve, and his subjects are showing upon their beaming countenances the smile that wont come off. Particularly is this true of some of them, the financiers of the East, into whose coffers the Billion Dollar Loan sought by England and France, if negotiated, will eventually flow, in return for more munitions of war. Yea, prosperity is smiling upon us. But may this be enough said along these lines, for this is not a journal of finance, but a very humble and unpretentious church publication. And what are the signs of the times on the horizon of our church work? Speaking of our local field, (and we believe the same is true of our church work in general) we can say that the signs are most propitious. The force of loyal workers lined up with us in our campaign were never more alert, more enthusiastic, and more aggressive, than just now. We are here to "fight it out along these lines if it takes all summer," (and summer has seemingly just begun, with the mercury at 90 degrees.) Nor was the outlook toward success ever more favorable than at present.

Of whatever successes our church has already attained we will not now speak, we bend to the tasks that yet lie before us, for in church work we never come to the point where enough has been accomplished. Therefore, as Paul says: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we *press toward the mark,*" and we thank the Lord for the vision of *"future prosperity"* that He holds out before us.

Temperature.

We are all aware of the fact that in case of a conversational emergency, i. e. being temporarily at a loss to know what to talk about, a very handy way out of the dilemma is to discuss the weather, enlarging upon its many varieties, its eccentricities, its influence for good or evil upon existing conditions.

Now we do not say that the MESSENGER is at present conversationally embarrassed. On the other hand there are topics galore that present themselves, to discuss which in the columns of our little sheet may not be bad form.

However, having thus far studiously avoided the weather-beaten topic of temperature, we might now with good grace take it up as a matter of diversion. It will be remembered that when the September issue of the MESSENGER was put upon the press the mercury in the thermometer was flirting with the 90 mark. Then it went coasting swiftly down the hill to about 35, and is just now (October 12,) again lazily on the ascent. Thus it appears that during the last fortnight there have been marked changes in temperature.

Now before proceeding further, we wish to say that in speaking of temperature we may apply that term not only to the climate, or the weather conditions that prevail, but even to our own activities.

In our previous issue we pointed out the fact that in certain lines of business, particularly the munitions-of-war supplying and the Anglo-French-war-loan-speculating end of our business, the temperature was soaring to the point of not only fever heat, but we might well say *"blood heat."* Be that as it may; it may end in *"dismay"* to millions of citizens of our country who have no part in that sort of temperature record breaking.

We leave that subject to take up the question of what temperature may be in that field of activities which we call church work. Has there been any change in temperature along these lines, as the last rose of summer has faded away and the bracing winds of autumn have begun to

blow? If so, has the change been favorable or unfavorable? Are we this Fall going to break any previous records of temperature in our church activities? We should in this field of labor proceed along the course of *contrasts,* and the lower the mercury drops in our thermometer the higher the temperature should soar in our church work; for this is certainly the season for renewed and intensified efforts. No longer can we plead the enervating effect of the Summer sun. The bracing temperature of the autumn days has put new vigor into our systems. May there be telling indications of that fact in our efforts to further the interests of our church and to extend the kingdom of God in general.

So may we be up and doing! May we as one man put our shoulder to the wheel with a determination to do something of consequence while golden opportunities are smiling upon us!

Who'll Bring the Next One?

There are three reasons which caused us to voice the above question. In the first place, we have now arrived at that season of the year which inspires us to increase activities in the interest of our church, inspires to renewed efforts in the line of making our own church attendance more regular and faithful, and also bringing others in order that the attendance may not only hold its own, but *grow* as each succeeding Sunday arrives. Then in the second place, our annual Sunday School rally is held next Sunday. That should be an occasion for missionary efforts. We should strive not only to fill the church on that particular day, but to make the increased attendance on Rally Day a permanent attendance. That might be done if we each bring one, someone who has no regular church affiliation, and if we make them feel that we have a genuine interest in their welfare, and that we will do all in our power to serve them and to make them feel at home.

The third reason for our question is that we had the

pleasure last Sunday to see one new pupil brought to our Sunday School by his mother and grandmother who accompanied him. He has a long way to come, but we are sure that he will be very faithful in attendance. It is a beautiful sight to see the children brought to the church and Sunday School by their parents and elders, and this particular instance reminded us of Timothy, Paul's young co-worker, who from his boyhood had been so fortunate as to have his mother and grandmother both faithfully concerning themselves about his spiritual welfare.

Now, mothers and grandmothers, and fathers, and sisters, and brothers, *who* among you *will bring the next one* to our church and Sunday School? No doubt there are many homes here in our city where the children are brought up without Christian instruction. Parents, are you at ease with such a condition? And if your own children do go to church, have you no concern for others, the children of your neighbors who grow up without any Christian influence guiding them?

"Who'll bring the next one?" Leave not this question unanswered. Come next Sunday, or the following Sunday, and bring one of the Lord's little lambs with you!

Count Your Many Blessings!

From the President of the United States and the Governor of this Commonwealth the proclamation has gone forth appointing Thursday, November 25, as a day of national thanksgiving.

From the days of the Puritan Fathers to the present time it has been the custom to celebrate annually such a national holiday, and may we consider it a great privilege to be citizens of a country where such unanimous public acknowledgment is made of the blessings received from Him who is the Ruler of the nations and the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Looking back upon the year which is now drawing to its close, and which has been characterized by more or less industrial depression, and during

which we as a people and nation have been called upon to face many difficulties and trying circumstances, it may seem to the superficial observer that there is not so much over which to grow enthusiastic on this Thanksgiving day.

After deeper reflection, however, it will look different, and if we should begin to enumerate our blessings, to "count them one by one," we would have to stop many a time, before we had reached the end of the list, to acknowledge, and that under a sense of great unworthiness on our part, that the goodness and mercy of God is still abounding. Let us see:

The crops all over the country have this year been most abundant, which means a "cornucopia," i. e., a horn of plenty, for all, both rich and poor.

The increase of a half cent per mile in railroad rates here in Missouri has put the railroads in a position to augment very materially their activities, giving employment to more men. Other lines of business are advancing correspondingly. There is now, we believe, work of some sort for all who wish to be employed. There is a healthy, cheerful glow on the fireside of our homes, even those of the poor. All these are blessings which should indeed make us grateful on this Thanksgiving day.

Then, too, the dove of peace is still hovering over our "Land of the Free," in spite of the fact that the war falcon has on several occasions flapped his wings and sent forth his ominous screech. Can we too highly appreciate that fact?

Also in matters spiritual we enjoy, notwithstanding menacing influences, liberty of conscience, and the blessings through which peace can abide in our hearts.

May this suffice. It is evident to us all that while untoward circumstances have made themselves felt to some extent during this year, the *advantages* we enjoy are still *vastly in the majority.*

May we, therefore, with glad hearts respond to the suggestion of our Governor, at 10 o'clock a. m., on Thanksgiving day to let all other activities cease for a few mo-

ments while we bend our heads in silent prayer and thanksgiving to the God of mercies. We shall have ample reasons for joy and gratitude as we "count our many blessings, count them one by one."

A Christmas Wish.

By the time this issue of the MESSENGER is in the hands of its readers, the beautiful Christmas season will already have been ushered in, with Christmas Day itself only a few watches hence.

Christmas is the season of giving, it has been said, and our readers are no doubt even now revolving in their minds the question of what gifts they shall choose for their many friends.

But this is also a season of well-wishing. Our hearts are filled with the spirit of good will toward our fellowmen, which spirit expresses itself in the wish that peace and joy may be their lot. So when we gather on Christmas morn, or throughout the day, the very air resounds with these expressions of good will: "Merry Christmas, merry Christmas," is heard everywhere, each one vieing with the other in being first to express this wish. Now the MESSENGER is determined this year to "beat you to it," all you readers who have perused its pages as each successive issue has come to you. We are first upon the scene this time to express that time-honored wish for a merry Christmas. And may we be allowed to add that we impart to it the genuine Christmas ring, and include in that wish all the blessings which belong to a truly happy Christmas.

May you be merry! However, not after the fashion of the world, which seeks its joys in fleeting material things, and makes a specialty of sensual pleasures, with which it desecrates this holy season.

But may you be merry in a manner compatible with the ideas of true culture and in harmony with Christian sentiment. For to make Christmas, that season of all others so replete with sacred memories and God-given bles-

sings—to make that season one continuous round of sensual pleasures, with the carnal desires running riot, is something, which, to say the least, ill behooves an enlightened people, to say nothing of a *Christian* community. So may you have moral backbone and Christian courage enough to shun the cesspools of the ungodly, and to choose your path far removed from the highways and byways of sin! May your heart be open to the true joy that Christmas brings, which is a joy *in the Lord,* and in the many blessings that He heaps upon us! Then you will have a truly happy Christmas, and peace will abide in your heart: that peace which the world cannot give and which passeth all understanding. May your experiences be such during the coming holidays! That is our Christmas wish to you.

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A Pioneer among the Swedish People of St. Louis.

The MESSENGER does not lay claim to any great distinction in the field of journalism. It has never assumed to be anything more than it is: a humble little church publication, devoted, as its program states, primarily to the interests of the Gethsemane Lutheran Church, and in general to the welfare of our countrymen in St. Louis and vicinity.

But it may not be amiss to say, that, as far as we have any record, we hold *priority* as regards the publication, here in St. Louis, of a newspaper, church or secular, for our Swedish people.

The first issue of the MESSENGER came out in January, 1912. Since then it has been published uninterruptedly and is now, consequently, completing its fourth year. As far as we know, no newspaper was published, at least not permanently, here in the city, for our Swedish people prior to 1912, and hence the MESSENGER stands as the *pioneer.* If there is any authentic record to the contrary, we will stand corrected with due apologies.

Now as to what has been accomplished through its four years of service, we will leave to its readers to judge.

We do maintain, however, that in every issue it has contained messages which, if appropriated into our lives, should have helped us to better things, and to attain to higher ideals. Also, its columns have been free from such matter (we do not need to specify), which in its very nature points the way to sin and vice, not only has the MESSENGER been free from such matter, but has time and again sounded the note of warning against degrading influences. That *should* be worth something to our people.

And now as we close this year, and also this four years' term of service, we would voice again a sincere expression of good will to all. May you be able more and more to realize those high ideals of life for which our Swedish people, as a whole, ever have labored, and which have been handed down to us as a precious heritage! And may you now all have, in the true sense of the word, *a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!*

PART V. 1916.

The Outlook.

The year 1916 is still in its infancy, and it may therefore seem a little premature to say very much about it. And yet, we believe the consensus of opinion is that it is a most likely-looking "youngster," one that gives promise of future achievement.

We must admit there has been considerable growth and development already, for the short period that has elapsed since the year made its advent among us. From all directions and along all lines, reports come of improved conditions and augmented business activities, all of which augurs well for the future.

With the return of prosperity comes, also, as a natural sequence, more progress in all other activities of life. Also more *confidence,* more *order,* more *tranquillity of mind.* which is necessary to the happiness and welfare of a people. So may we be glad of the outlook for the future which 1916 has brought. And may we be vigilant to note and ready to make use of every opportunity, that we, personally, in all good things, may keep pace with the growth and development of the new year.

May this be true particularly in our church work, by which we grow spiritually and become more and more mature for our ultimate destiny: likeness to Christ, and participation in His eternal glory.

And when we consider our church work here in "*Gethsemane,*" the outlook is not gloomy, but bright with hope and promise. The shadows may be dark at times, as they were in that Gethsemane where our blessed Saviour suffered His deep agonies; yet, the shadows depart before the light that shines forth from temptations and obstacles overcome, and victories won. May there only be among us a more *untiring vigilance* against the powers of evil, and a *firmer resolution to overcome* by the power of Him whose

name is "Victory," and who maketh all things new by His mighty hand.

Will you, dear congregation, rally more *loyally* and *zealously* around *His standard?* Then is our outlook bright, indeed, for "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles."

"R. S. V. P."

"Repondez s'il vous plait." This little sentence, which means respond if you please, is for the communicant members of our congregation. When the Finance Committee, according to the motion passed at our annual business meeting, calls on you to get your pledge as to the weekly amount you will give to the support of our church work, then *"repondez s'il vous plait."* And will you not do so *kindly, enthusiastically* and *liberally?* remembering that there is no "Savings Institution" which renders *greater returns* than the kingdom of God. It pays *compound interest* at an infinitely *higher ratio* than any other institution. When you are about to leave this world, dear friend, to enter into eternity, you will know that we have here spoken the *truth.* So *"R. S. V. P.",* and do it lovingly and liberally.

Obituary.

It is our sad duty to record in this issue the loss of one of our members, our worthy Trustee, F. J. Norden. From time to time during the last year there had been temporary indications of failing health. These indications assumed a more serious aspect about three months ago, when Mr. Norden was stricken with an obstinate attack of pneumonia. This attack refused, though under the physician's skillful care, to abate, but developed and turned into other complications. Yet, we all hoped for his recovery until the very last days, when it became evident that his otherwise strong constitution was succumbing to the unyielding

disease. On Sunday, January 23, shortly after the noon hour, he passed away in the noontide of his life, for he was only 48 years of age. Mr. Norden was born in Bengsfors Dalsland, Sweden, December 31, 1867; came to this country 1886 and settled in Omaha, Neb., where he lived until 1896, when he moved to this city. In 1894 he was married to Miss Augusta Gibson of Omaha. Always a hard working man and efficient in his line, he had worked up a fine business, we believe the best in this section of the city. He had now matters so arranged that he could have had more opportunity to enjoy the fruitage of his labors, and so, humanly speaking, his demise was too early. But the Lord's ways are not our ways, and He doeth all things well. Therefore we cannot but bow in humble submission to His will and rest assured that "all the ways of the Lord are goodness and truth to those who keep His covenant." During his weeks of illness Mr. Norden had time to meditate, and he used that time well. He communed earnestly and faithfully with his Saviour in prayer and through the Word. His prayers were heard, and when the end came he was consequently able to say, with peace and resignation: "Thy will, O Lord, be done."

F. J. NORDEN.

From his own personal testimony and by the grace of the Lord, our Saviour, we can now, therefore, rejoice in the assurance that there was vouchsafed unto him a triumphant entry into that eternal peace and rest, which remaineth unto the children of God. He leaves to mourn his loss a beloved wife, four daughters, three brothers, and three sisters, other relatives and a host of friends.

God grant to the bereaved family abundant grace to bear with Christian fortitude this affliction! The funeral

was held Tuesday afternoon, January 25. There was a great concourse of people, both at the home and at the church, and many were the tokens of love and the expressions of sympathy. We will feel the loss in our little congregation. But at the same time we rejoice in the *glorious victory* that has been won *by faith*, and by the *church*, which is *God's own agency* among men for the *salvation of souls*.

Patriotism.

In view of the fact that we have recently celebrated two of our national holidays, a few words anent the subject of patriotism may not be out of place.

The birthdays of such men as Washington, "the Father of the Country," and Lincoln, the great "Emancipator," are events which it certainly behooves us, as an American people, to celebrate. It reflects credit upon us, who now are reaping the fruit of their noble self-sacrificing labors to hold in grateful remembrance their lives and their achievements.

So may we ever with true patriotism and undiminished zeal revere the memories of those two men, who in a higher degree than any other two individuals were instrumental in making this country what it has been so long, and is to-day, "The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave."

But there is another kind of patriotism which we do well in remembering. We might call it *"Church patriotism,"* for it consists of love and loyalty to the church within whose protecting fold and under whose fostering care we have received our spiritual nourishment to the development of the *"inner man."*

While we firmly believe in the separation of Church and State, and that there should be no conflict between the two, we likewise believe in giving each their due, and acknowledging that we owe as much to the one as to the other. Surely we owe as much to the Institution which,

through its *Means of Grace,* can vouchsafe unto us *Life Eternal* as to the one which guarantees to us, temporally, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Therefore, may we grow in love and loyalty to both the State and the Church.

In speaking of Church patriotism, we are reminded that this is an historic year in our Augustana Synod. At our Institutions of Learning as well as at the coming annual convention of the Synod in June, the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of one of the Synod's founders will be duly celebrated. Even before another issue of the MESSENGER reaches its readers (March 2) we shall have passed the day on which, one hundred years ago, in Ousby Parish, Kristianstads County, Sweden, was born Tufve Nilsson Hasselquist, the man who was destined to play such a great part in the organizing and developing of our Synod. In September, 1852, he came to America, where, according to divine providence, he was to spend the rest of his life to promote the spiritual welfare of the Swedish Lutherans, who at that early date had imigrated hither and were scattered in little colonies here and there in various parts of the Union. Space does not permit a lengthy account of his life and labors. Suffice it to say that he was a pioneer among our people in America, not only as a Pastor, but also in other fields: for instance, Journalism, and Higher Institutions of Learning. Thus as early as January, 1855, he began the publication of "Gamla och Nya Hemlandet," which periodical we might call the "first fruits" of Swedish Journalism in this country. Later he became Editor of "Augustana," the official organ of the Synod. He also gave valued contributions to many other publications. He was one of the founders of "Augustana College and Theological Seminary," of which Institution he was for many years, until his death in 1891, the efficient and highly esteemed President. In short, it may be said that for a period of a generation, during the time which can be characterized as the *formative period* of our Synod, he was the *Leader,* ruling with firm yet gentle hand

the people who came under his care. He was a patriarch, a father among his people.

As George Washington has been called the father of the country, so it can be said of Hasselquist that he in a great measure was the father of the Swedish Lutheran church in America. And now as we rejoice in the fruitage of the labors of our national heroes, Washington and Lincoln, may we not forget to voice also our appreciation of the self-sacrificing toil of our church heroes, among whom for a long time Hasselquist was the man "par excellence." And may we first and last and always thank our heavenly Father, who by His unseen yet mighty hand shapes the destinies of both Church and State. May we thank Him for the blessings that come to us here in America, this land of opportunities, of advantages, of possibilities—this land *that we love!*

Ladies' Aid Celebration.

On Thursday, February 10, twenty-four years ago, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Swenson, 1200 Armstrong Ave., were united in the bonds of matrimony. The members of the Ladies' Aid Society had in some manner gained knowledge of the fact. And so to help make it a memorable anniversary, and also to tender Mrs. Swenson a little surprise as President of the Society, they all gathered at the Swenson home to spend the afternoon. It is putting it mildly, according to those who were there, to say that the afternoon *was most agreeably spent.* And who can enjoy themselves more heartily than a gathering of women at an occasion of this kind? Congratulatory speeches, interspersed with music, was the order of the day. Mrs. Fridolph Thoren acted as spokeswoman and gave, it is reported, the star speech of the afternoon.

Of course the "kaffe tår" and "dopp" had its usual prominent place on the program.

The following poem, written in honor of the occasion, was read by Mrs. Segerhammar. On request we give it

space in The Messenger, provided the Linotype manipulators will take the extra trouble to make their machines speak Swedish.

I februari månad är 1892,
På denna dag, den tionde, så vill man nu pastä
Här firades en högtid, så treflig och så rar,
Ty dessa båda vänner då blef ett äkta par.

Och vänner till de båda, de lyckeliga tu,
Som voro med och firade, de minnes det ännu.
Och många gånger sedan i Swensons trefna bo
Vi samlats med hvarandra i glädje, frid, och ro.

Och vänskapen den sanna, så har det blifvit sagdt
Den binder oss tillsamman med en förund'lig makt;
Och därför gör det ringa hur åren löpa hän,
En vänskap, säsom denna, är lika trofast än.

Och därför äro vi nu här på denna glada dag,
Att fira en högtidlig fest i muntert systerlag,
Och gratulera, som sig bör, fru Swenson säsom "*brud*,"
Som 24 år sen nu var klädd i bröllöpsskrud.

Men icke det allenast oss samlat här i dag,
Det är en annan orsak af annan art och slag,
Den vill vi ochså nämna, att det må blifva klart
Hvad denna fest betyder—allt bör va' uppenbart.

Nu är det så, det vet ni, vi tillhör *Ladies Aid*,
Och arbeta med lif och lust i täta, slutna led,
För allt godt verk, som främjar Guds rikssak—ädelt mål
En ständig verksamhet det är, ty afbrott den ej täl.

Men uti detta företag, om det skall framgång ha,
Behöfva vi en *ledare*, ja, då går allting bra,
Om någon *förer ordet* och *styr på bästa sätt*,
Då går det *gladt* och *lustigt* och *bördan* den blir *lätt*.

Och så *hon* gått i spetsen, båd bittida och sent,
Fru Swenson, som en *skicklig* och *modig* President,
Med goda råd och företag hon hulpit saken ann,
Och sparat ingen möda—Hvem bättre göra kan?

Vi äro därför ense i *detta företag*,
Att *skänka här en hyllning i varma ordalag*,
En hyllning, som på alla sätt och vis är väl förtjänt,
Ty Mrs. Swenson *lyckats väl*, som "*brud*" och "*President*."

Och må hon under många år sann glädje njuta få
Af sin osparda möda och sin villighet att gå
I spetsen för all' goda verk och ädla företag—
Det är vår önskan, en och hvar, på denna minnesdag.

"Watch Ye and Pray!"

For some time the public press has contained much criticism of the policy of our national administration, which policy has been characterized by the phrase: "Watchful Waiting." We believe that criticism refers not so much to the first part of the phrase as to the second. All no doubt agree as to the wisdom of *watchfulness,* for "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." But as to waiting, when *action* seems to be imperative, that is where opinions differ, for some people reason that "procrastination is the thief of time," and while we *wait* golden opportunities for bettering the situation in question might be slipping from our grasp.

Be that as it may, the Messenger is not inclined to enter into the controversy. It does desire, however, to discuss the subject of "Watchfulness" from another viewpoint.

As citizens of the Kingdom of God, there are many duties devolving upon us, among which watchfulness certainly occupies a prominent place. Our international relations have need of no more vigilance than *we,* as members of the Kingdom of God, in regard to the *"foreign"* elements and influences with which we must constantly contend. We are at war, as the apostle says, with "powers and principalities" of evil. Unless there is earnest and ceaseless watchfulness on our part, we will soon find ourselves enmeshed in complications from which to extricate ourselves will be a most difficult task. The Lord Jesus Christ, He who knew as none else both the weakness of human nature and the snares and pitfalls thrown in the way of His followers, constantly reminded His own of the need of watchfulness and prayer.

The above headline is taken from His words of counsel spoken to His disciples in that dark night of His suffering in Gethsemane. They had not been able to watch with Him in His deep agonies; and though the enemy was even at that moment lurking near, armed and ready to seize their Master and condemn Him to death, they were wrapt in slumber. Now, while their vigilance could not have stayed the aggression of that murderous mob, yet, it was vital to their own spiritual interests for them to be on their guard. How sadly was not that fact illustrated a little later in the experiences of Peter, when through lack of proper watchfulness and prayer he was led to disown his Master.

Dear reader, are *you* heeding this earnest admonition of your blessed Saviour: *"Watch ye and pray?"* As a church, are we truly on our guard against *"foreign aggression?"* As individual Christians, are we constant in watchfulness and prayer? Or do we close our eyes to the dangers and—fall into the snares set by our adversary, who "goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour;" and again comes subtly, in the guise of a friend. Are *you* on your guard, dear friend, for instance as to what company you keep, what pleasures you seek, what literature you are reading, what habits you are forming? Do not say: "Oh well, I like to see and hear both sides of the question." Do not say that, for if you are a *Christian,* then there is but *one side,* and that is *the side of the Lord.* We need not throw ourselves into a fire to ascertain whether or not fire will burn, or take an adder into our bosom to see whether or not an adder will sting. There is a saying to the effect that "a word to the wise is sufficient." Are you *wise,* in the true sense of the word? Then suffice it to say unto you again, in the words of your Saviour: "Watch ye and pray!"

Congregational Singing.

There are many things which enter into a public divine service which either help or hinder the good effect

and the blessings that should come to us in taking part in public worship. Of course, the audience expect the preacher "to have a message," and to deliver it in acceptable form; and we do not deny that they have a right to such expectations. But there are other things quite as important as a good sermon. For instance, the *spirit* in which the *congregation enters into the different parts of the service,* the responses of the liturgy, the prayers, and the hymns. Also the manner in which the audience *listens* to the message from the pulpit. There is something in being an *acceptable speaker,* but there is no less importance in being an *acceptable hearer.*

But it was especially the congregational singing we now had in mind. This can be such that it adds very materially to the beautiful, uplifting and edifying qualities of a service, or it can be just the opposite. When the hymns are sung in a manner which betokens very little of reverence or of a worshipful spirit, it is unnecessary to say that the effect is very discouraging to all concerned. Likewise when the songs are sung listlessly, dragging out the melody as if the singers were utterly exhausted and unable to follow the correct tempo, the result will inevitably be unfavorable. The general impression of the *entire service,* whatever the *sermon* may be, is that it has been tedious and uninteresting.

On the other hand, when the hymns are sung in a true spirit of worship, of extolling the name of the Most High, and when, moreover, some degree of *vitality* is infused into the singing, the impression of the service is what it should be. It leaves the soul of each participant edified and uplifted. Our souls have "mounted up as with wings of eagles" nearer to Him whom we adore, whom we worship, and who is the Source from whom all blessings flow.

May *our* congregational singing more and more rise to such a standard!

Behold the Lamb of God!

As this issue of the MESSENGER reaches its readers we will be celebrating Good Friday and Easter, the two days which have more significance for us in our present and our future life than any other. And as we meditate upon the events of those days and try to picture to ourselves the scenes that were enacted on Golgotha and at the Tomb, there is one Figure that stands out as infinitely more prominent than any other and upon whom our thoughts and our vision are irresistibly centered. We see Him go uncomplainingly forth under the burden of the cross, which He is constrained to bear toward Calvary. We see His bruised and bleeding form, as the crown of thorns is pressed upon His brow and the nails driven through His hands and feet, and the words of John the Baptist come to us in all their solemn significance: "Behold the Lamb of God!" The cross is lifted aloft with its precious burden, and again words of infinite meaning are impressed upon our heart, words that were once spoken by Him who now from the cross looks down in divine mercy and love upon a sinful world: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

A few moments more and—"It is finished." Finished, indeed, is the Paschal Sacrifice offered for all mankind. The Lamb of God has been slain that the sins of the world might be taken away.

O, friends, behold the Lamb of God and rejoice, with trembling joy, that "the iniquities of us all were laid upon Him," that we, through His death, might inherit Eternal Life!

And as Easter morn dawns may we repair to the Tomb to receive that glorious confirmation of our hope of Life Eternal. For, lo, the Tomb is empty. He is risen a Victor over death and the grave, and, yea, the gates of hell. The sadness of Good Friday then gives way to a joy unspeakable, and with the Psalmist of old we sing: "This is the

day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

A Warm Greeting from a Northern Clime.

The MESSENGER is in receipt of a letter from Miss Hilma Seastedt of Grand Rapids, Mich. The letter is full of well wishes for our church and all its workers. Also, the *"warm"* greeting is accompanied by a generous amount of *"cold cash"* of which a part covers her church dues for the entire year, and the rest goes to the MESSENGER for a year's subscription.

We express our sincere thanks, and also take the liberty to return most cordial greetings from the entire congregation.

Oklahoma Scores.

From time to time it has been the pleasure of the Editor to record in the columns of the MESSENGER kind words and deeds tendered our congregation by loyal members and friends who are temporarily or permanently sojourning in other parts of the country. In the last issue we acknowledged the receipt of hearty greetings and also a kind contribution to our church from Miss Hilma Seastedt who resides at Grand Rapids, Mich.

This time *Oklahoma scores.* Wafted on the balmy breezes from the Southwest there comes to us a cordial greeting from our ever loyal member, A. C. Fulton of Bartlesville, Okla. The greeting, moreover, comes accompanied by a generous birthday gift in the form of a "ten spot" which is to be used for whatever good purpose the congregation may see fit. Considering that Mr. Fulton's dues for the year were already paid in advance, we say: Who can beat this for outright kindness and generosity?

In behalf of the congregation, we beg to offer sincere thanks and also most cordial congratulations anent the birthday.

Wisconsin Counters.

No sooner had we recorded the "scoring of Oklahoma" of a "ten spot," plus one, (the one going to the MESSENGER) in the interest of the support and extension of our little congregation, than Wisconsin comes along and registers a "counter stroke" carrying almost the same number of units. $10.00 have namely been received as a contribution to our church from our friends Mr. and Mrs. Burtis Bengtson of Racine, Wis. Now, friends, this is certainly kind of you all, and again the MESSENGER has the honor to speak for the congregation in conveying most cordial thanks and well wishes.

The North and the South.

Again these two sections of our country, as in the Sixties, seem to be engaged in a struggle for supremacy; not in arms, however, but in deeds of kindness, the object of which is the furthering of the interests of our congregation.

Some time ago Texas, through our friends F. A. Swensons of Amarillo, "declared itself" in favor not of slavery, but of *"freedom,"* freedom of our congregation from financial worries, and substantiated that declaration by a generous contribution. The North at once "took up the challenge," Michigan registering a number of telling counts through its always wide-awake and aggressive citizen Miss Hilma Seastedt of Grand Rapids. The South stood by her guns, scoring a "ten spot" plus one through A. C. Fulton of Bartlesville, Okla., and it was beginning to look as if the South this time would win. Then came the counter stroke from Wisconsin through our friends Burtis Bengtsons of Racine, and as matters now stand we believe the contest will have to be judged a "draw."

Now this is indeed getting interesting; nay, more than that. It is warming our hearts with gratitude to see such love and loyalty on the part of our friends who have labored with us, passing through many shadows and facing

many struggles here in "our Gethsemane." One thing is certain; we have time and again received speaking proofs of that fact: the Lord looks after His own, among which is the Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 3116 St. Vincent Ave., St. Louis, Mo. Substantial support of our work has come from time to time from both the North and the South, the East and the West, to say nothing of those nearer the center. Texas and Okla.; Minn., Wis., and Mich.; Kan. and Neb.; New York and Pa. have vied with each other in supporting our work in St. Louis. Iowa and Ill. are nearer the "fulcrum" and hold the "balance of power." Allow us to repeat once more our sincere thanks to all our loyal friends, and to voice again our faith in the future of our St. Louis field.

A Pleasant Visit from Chicago.

A very pleasant visit was lately paid our congregation by Mr. E. W. Palmquist now of Chicago. He came in on Saturday morning and stayed until Sunday evening. At the Sunday morning service Mr. Palmquist was in his pew as formerly when we could claim him as our worthy member, trustee and treasurer, and when he was never absent from the Sunday morning service. It is needless to say that all were glad to see him, to shake his hand and be warmed by the cordiality of its grasp, and by his ever cheerful smile. Mr. Palmquist reported business very good in Chicago and that he was pleased with his location there.

E. W. PALMQUIST.
For many years trustee and treasurer of the Church, and in general one of its most active members.

As to church work, he and his family are already taking a leading part in

the activities of one of the Swedish Lutheran churches of Chicago. A debt more than twice as large as ours is resting upon that church; but they are not worried about it, and at one evening meeting, spontaneously, without any previous planning or forethought, they raised $1,500.00 to meet a payment that had come due.

We have our suspicions that in that accomplishment, as well as in all undertakings looking toward the welfare of the church, Mr. Palmquist was one of the leading forces. We congratulate Brother Nelson upon the acquisition of the Palmquist family.

And now in behalf of our congregation we thank most cordially for the pleasant visit, for the very generous contribution to the Sunday morning offering, which we know was accompanied by the warmest well wishes for our work here, and for the cheerful encouragement given us who are still plodding along within the shadows of "Gethsemane." We beg also to extend our hearty greetings to Mrs. Palmquist, Max and Gustave.

Flowers of Spring.

Under the covers imbedded deep
In the earth's cold, dreary prison,
From out their weary wintry sleep
The flowers of spring have risen,
Telling of those who in shadows grope
Of rekindled life and a new-born hope.

Arrayed in colors of every hue
That can please the eye in beholding;
Fresh with the kiss of the morning dew,
As their petals are unfolding,
They give us a vision most wondrous fair,
Beyond our ability to compare.

Vainly we seek for the words we need
To describe the vision before us,
But for a grateful heart we plead,
And for grace to join in the chorus:
With nature to clap our hands and sing
Our praises to nature's God and King.

Who causes the flowers, so fresh and fair,
With colors of beauty streaming
To spring from the earth, the dark prison there,
With new life and new hope abeaming,
Directing our soul in a lofty flight
To the heavenly land of our pure delight.

Where wintry winds and hoary frost,
Their mark of death impressing,
Are never known; no beauty lost,
But ever new, refreshing,
The flowers grow, the hopes arise
In God's eternal Paradise.

Peace or Perturbation?

Sixth Sunday after Easter.

Text:—John 15: 18-27.

This is the headline we wish to place above our discourse today. In using that term "perturbation," we have not striven to find as big a word as possible. We are using it because of the symphony of sound, and yet as a matter of antithesis. Peace and perturbation both begin with the same letter, and are in that respect similar, though entirely opposite in meaning.

Now, if instead of perturbation, which is a word of Latin derivation, we should use the Anglo-Saxon, it would be unrest, or strife, or disquietude. And so we might word our headline thus: "Peace or Unrest!"

But why have we chosen such a topic? Because we find everywhere those two factors striving for the mastery, and we are sorry to say that at present the latter has very decidedly the upper hand. All over the world unrest is sitting like a king upon his throne, and is master and monarch of all he surveys. Look at the situation over there in Europe. Peace has fled like a frightened dove would flee at the approach of some horrible bird of prey, and strife and unrest are daily making conditions among millions of people over there more unbearable, more unspeakable. Brother is pitted against brother in deadly

struggle. Peoples who are neighbors and have so many things in common, being bound together by even sanguinary ties, and who therefore should live together in peace and harmony, are now putting forth every effort and exhausting every means of human ingenuity and skill to exterminate one another. The entire continent is aflame with war, is being steeped in human *blood,* is quaking on its very foundations, and, tottering, it seems, as to one gigantic, one all-crushing fall.

"History repeats itself" is an old saying that has oft been verified; and it seems that it is repeating itself now with accelerated speed, and with the force of years, nay centuries, of pentup feelings of race hatred and jealousy.

Yes, history repeats itself. Peoples have come and gone in the past; empires have risen and fallen; nations have been established and then dismembered; kingdoms have toppled, and thrones have crumbled; and those things are, no doubt, being repeated now on the old continent on a scale so gigantic, so enormous, that we shudder and stand aghast at the consequences.

And as we look into the future, what do we see? Any signs of the restoration of peace? Any tokens that point toward harmony? That the black ghastly birds of prey will soon vanish into the dark abyss whence they came, leaving the dove of peace once more calmly and quietly to nestle in her olive groves? We cannot tell. The situation defies, we believe, even the sagacity of the sages. We can only hope and pray that the future may bring *peace, not further perturbation.*

But there is another phase of human life, another sphere of human activity, to which we wish to call your attention, and in regard to which we have reason to propound the question contained in our topic: "Shall there be peace or perturbation, quiet or unrest?" We refer to our *spiritual life.* For we are so constituted that we are destined not only for this life but for the life which is to come. We are endowed by our Creator not only with a body, with physical powers and possibilities, but with a

soul, which is immortal, and which, therefore, cannot be satisfied with the things of this world or this present time. This world and our life here is not our true abode. Our eternal home is not here, but beyond. We are only sojourners here for a season, and this present life is given us as an opportunity of preparation for the life to come.

However, God has so ordained that we should enjoy certain blessings even in this life: fellowship with Him, communion with our God and Saviour. We were created in God's own image, like unto Him, without sin and with the possibilities of true and eternal happiness. And though that image was perverted through sin, and the God-given estate of true joy and happiness was lost, we still have the privilege to strive for its restoration, to regain that which was lost. But because sin has once gotten into the world and into our very nature, we cannot attain to our ideal, or regain our lost estate without strife and unrest. There are forces that would prevent us. We are at war, as the Apostle says, with powers and principalities of evil. We find even within our own being elements at war with one another, the flesh and the spirit. Paul says in his letter to the Romans: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." Just think of it, two laws, two forces, two desires, two inclinations, opposite in nature and influence, at work in the same heart! How can there be peace? How can we avoid strife and unrest? It is because of sin. From the time of man's fall in the Garden of Eden to the present moment, these opposite forces have been at work. From the day that the Lord said to the serpent: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."—From that day to this, and until the end of time, there is strife between the powers of evil and the powers of righteousness. So it seems that this question. "Shall there be peace or perturbation?" must be answered

unfavorably, thus: "No, there cannot be peace, there must be strife." Yes, and yet we have the possibilities of peace within our reach. God did not leave the situation as it was after the fall, for the reason that He is a God of *love* and *mercy.* Had He been only a God of *justice,* of *righteousness,* He would have left the situation as it *was,* and us to work out our own salvation as best we could. He would have required of us atonement for our trespasses; that we had paid the penalty of our sins. But He is a God of love, plenteous in mercy, and therefore He looked with compassion upon struggling humanity and made preparations for their peace. He decreed that the spiritual darkness that had encompassed His children because of sin should be dispersed. Yea, "the people that walked in darkness saw a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light did shine."—And the dawn of a better day appeared. A glorious sunrise from above shed its benign blessings upon all mankind. And so in the fullness of time one blessed morn there burst over the hills and valleys of Judea the sweet strains of heavenly music. Celestial choirs sang as they had never sung before, and the message of that heavenly song was this: "Peace on earth, good will toward men." The Prince of Peace had come, and peace and rest was once more within the grasp of man. And as the years passed by and He had taken up His Messianic calling, He went about, over those hills and valleys of Judea, through the cities of Samaria, and along the shores of the Galilee, "doing good and healing all that were oppressed," pouring the Balm of Gilead over troubled spirits, driving out from the hearts of men, who were weary and heavy laden, the unrest of this world, and filling them with a joy that knew no measure, with "the peace that passeth all understanding."

But though He thus brought calm out of chaos, and peace out of perturbation for man, there was very little peace for Him, "the Son of man." He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." "He was wounded for

our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." He endured the hatred of the world, which He had not merited, for as He says in our text: "They hated me without a cause." But He endured it all: hatred, persecution, and finally the cross, for *our* sake; to break down the barriers that sin had reared between us and our salvation; to restore our God-given estate of peace and happiness. And so from the viewpoint of our own sinful nature, and the forces of unrest at work in our own heart, we can, in the light of God's infinite mercy and love revealed in Christ Jesus, answer the question: "Peace or Perturbation?" in the *affirmative*, and say: *"Yes, there shall be peace."*

But there is another side to the question. Having come out victorious in the first struggle for the restoration of peace, by a mastery of self, a crucifixion of the flesh, a cleansing of the heart from the stains of sin by the appropriation of Christ and His all-atoning blood; we still find ourselves in a *state of unrest* because of *other evil forces* that beset us, other enemies that make war upon us. The Lord speaks of that plainly in our text. For He is anxious that there shall be no misunderstanding on our part as to what Christian life and spiritual warfare implies. Else there might easily arise a false sense of security and peace. Having conquered himself through a faithful appropriation of Christ's own merits, the Christian will not be left unmolested to enjoy the peace, for which he yearns, and which is his God-given right. Another force is at once at work in an intensified effort to intimidate him, and cause him to lose courage and give up his hope of peace and rest. That force is the *world*. With furious open assault, and again with subtle secret snares, the world, prompted and coached by its master, the devil, will beset the seeker after eternal peace in a never ceasing effort to bring to naught his ardent hopes. Therefore did the Saviour time and again forewarn His followers of that danger. In our text today He says: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated

Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. But all these things they shall do unto you for My name's sake." And what seems to make matters worse, from the viewpoint of outward unrest, is the fact that the more we love our Master, the more faithfully we serve Him, the more intense will be the hatred of the world. What shall we do about it? Shall we give up in despair, or in carelessness and indifference, and think: "What is the use? Better enjoy peace while we may, by assuming an indifferent, *'neutral'* standpoint, than to further antagonize the world by a clear, outspoken and unyielding adherence to Christ." Many there are, indeed, who have taken such a standpoint, to the deep humiliation of the Christian warrior be it said. But have they gained peace, *true peace,* thereby? Did Peter gain peace and security by such a standpoint in that dark night, when Jesus was brought before the tribunal of Pilate? Will *any one* gain peace by catering to the world and denying Christ? No, indeed. Such a standpoint only gathers *more unrest, around us* and *within us.* The *only course* is to take our stand the *more firmly* and *unalterably* by our Master's side. And what if "the servant fares no better than his Master," at the hands of the world? Is it not, nevertheless, through Christ, and *Him alone,* that peace is to be attained? And here, as in regard to the forces of unrest within us, Christ is our Victor. By appropriating Him to ourselves through faith, His victory over the world becomes *our victory.* He said to His disciples, upon leaving them to return to His heavenly glory: "In this world ye shall have tribulation; but be of *good cheer, I have overcome the world.*" And so He has, *once* and *for all;* and His victory was *complete.* Have we not just recently celebrated His great triumph over the world, as well as over the powers of death and hell, in the glorious events of Good Friday and Easter? To be sure the world stood mocking at the cross on Golgotha. They did "shoot out their lips" and "shake their heads" in *de-*

rision at the *Crucified One.* But, ah, their satanic glee was short. On Easter morn the broken seal of Pilate, the awed Roman guard, which had fled; the *empty tomb,* announced to all the world that the *Prince of Life* had risen a Victor over the world, the devil and the gates of hell. O, thou Christian warrior, thou contender for that price eternal, the *Crown of Glory,* thou seeker after eternal peace and rest: Be of good cheer, thou hast won already, thou art even now the victor through faith in *Christ and Him Crucified.* Continue therefore to fight the good fight of faith, continue to fulfill the glorious calling that Jesus here entrusts to you when He finally says in our text today: "And ye also shall bear witness." Bear witness unto the end of Christ your Saviour. Bear witness of "the victory that overcometh the world," our *faith.* Bear witness of the *"peace* which passeth all understanding." Your coveted goal, *Eternal Peace,* is before you—a little while and you shall have reached it.

And so in closing we repeat our question: "Peace or Perturbation?" In the light of God's infinite love and mercy, and by the grace of Him who is the Giver of Life and the Prince of Peace, we answer: *"There shall be peace."*

The Lord, moreover, according to His gracious promise in our text shall send us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, and "He which hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Therefore, at last, when our course here on earth is run, when our warfare is ended, our battle fought and won —*there shall be peace.* "At evening time there shall be light," and peace and love. "For God hath spoken it"; He has ordained it; He has given His Son that we might have peace.

And even here in this life, notwithstanding all outward unrest: all strife among the nations, all struggles between the flesh and the spirit, all the bitter hatred of the world; we hear, above the din of battle and the noise of the storm, the voice of the Master as in the days of old —*"Peace, be still!"* And at the foot of the cross where

Christ has died for you and me, we find a safe retreat from the storms and strifes of life.

"In the cross of Christ I glory"—*and there is peace and rest.*

A Day of Rejoicing.

We are justified in using the above headline as a characterization of Sunday, June 11th. That joy filled the hearts of all those present at the two services was amply evidenced in the glad expression of their faces and in their warm handshakes. And there was cause for joy. Not only did we celebrate Pentecost, that great and wondrous event in the history of the Christian Church, which fact in itself was cause enough for joy, but we also had the pleasure to add twelve members (the apostolic number) to our church. Among these, ten were adults and two children. Mr. Charles Erickson of 1017 S. 13th St., together with his two children Charles Edward and Mary Margaret, was received by letter, the other nine became adult members by Confirmation; these were:

Nancy Johnson	Estelle Johnson
Olga Hagemann	Carl Lundvall
Frieda Thoren	Clifford Nygren
Genevieve Johnson	Alf Cederquist
Helen Swenson	

In the examination, which consumed the greater part of an hour, all acquitted themselves very creditably, giving ample proof of diligent study and earnestness in their work. Besides the catechisation, the Confirmation Rite, and the address by the pastor, Mr. C. O. Johnson gave a very fitting talk in behalf of the Church Council, who constitute the School Board, and who watch with great interest the Christian instruction imparted to the young, and how these "grow in grace and wisdom before God and man."

Special music, in harmony with the occasion, was rendered by the choir and by Miss Elvera Norden. Each member of the class was awarded a Bible and a Diploma or

CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 1916

Top Row, Left to Right: Stella Johnson, Frieda Thoren, Carl Lundval, Clifford Nygren, Alf Cederquist, Helen Swenson, Genevieve Johnson

Bottom Row, Left to Right: Olga Hagemann, the Pastor, Nancy Johnson.

Certificate of Confirmation, from the church, and as a special gift from the pastor, the little book "Be Thou My Guide." The service closed with the singing of the hymn "Now Thank We all our God," the audience rising as the last stanza was sung and the benediction was pronounced. There were tears in the eyes of some and other tokens of the deep impression the entire service had made. But the tears were tears of joy, for we had experienced that the Lord is good and that His mercy endureth forever.

In the evening the Lord's Supper was celebrated, when the catechumens for the first time partook of this blessed sacrament. A large representation of the congregation also communed at the Lord's altar and board. Miss Hilma Samuelson sang an appropriate solo, and the choir rendered the beautiful selection by Edward Moore "The Lord is My Shepherd." The song came as a fitting emphasis to the words of the pastor, which in the forenoon had been based upon that passage, and in the evening on the last three verses of the same psalm.

And so the day came to a close, that day which the Lord had made, that day of rejoicing in Gethsemane.

Harvest Time.

June is the month of harvests, and from the neighboring states: Illinois and Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma reports come to the effect that the harvest is now on and bids fair to meet all former records. Missouri is not to be outdone, but will measure up well to the standards of the sister states. But we had in mind just now not the harvest of farm crops, but of souls into the garners of God's Kingdom. And why should not June also in that respect be a season of harvest? Within this month we have had Pentecost, on which day there was in the Apostolic Church, an ingathering of 3,000 souls. Within our own field of labor here in St. Louis, we have lately had the pleasure to witness a similar harvest, which, even if not on so large a scale, has nevertheless given us great

encouragement. On Pentecost Sunday we received twelve members into our church, and on the following Sunday four more, namely Mr. and Mrs. Herman W. Johnson, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Johnson. We bid all these members cordially welcome, and we assure them that all that can be done shall be done to make their membership among us both pleasant and profitable, in the best sense of the word.

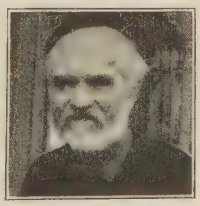
And now may the harvest continue! It is the Lord's will to gather them in, whomsoever will, that His house may be filled.

Obituary.

It is our sad duty in this issue of the Messenger to record the demise of the man whose well-known countenance here appears, our oldest chartered member, P. J. Gords. For a period of two or three years his health had been on the decline, but his rugged system withstood the effect of failing health much longer than is ordinarily the case. He finally succumbed to the inevitable, Friday, May 26, at the age of 73 yrs., 3 mo., and 9 da.

Peter J. Gords was born in Wäsby parish, Malmö, Sweden, February 17, 1844. As a young man he came to this country, residing for a short time at St. Paul, Minn., and also at New Orleans, La., locating finally in St. Louis in 1869. It thus appears that Gords was one of the earliest Swedish settlers of this city, and as to length of permanent residence, he held, without any doubt, the first place.

In the passing away of Gords not only did our church lose its eldest chartered member, but this community lost a citizen who for nearly a half century labored faithfully and consistently to make it what it is to-day.



P. J. GORDS.

As a further tribute to this pioneer among us, we beg to refer our readers to the following extracts from the

sermons which were preached on the day of his funeral.

"His day, which was far spent, has now been brought to a close—and we ask what kind of a day was it? We believe you will agree in characterizing it as a *day of usefulness*—and what higher tribute can be paid any man? His was a day of usefulness in the *home,* the *community,* and the *church.* At the time of his arrival here, 1869, this community was, as it is now and ever will be, in need of *constructive* minds and forces. St. Louis was at that time scarcely more than a good sized village. It was at the close of a devastating war. There was, therefore, in this city, as in all the country, great need of *constructive forces;* builders to build up the city and community. Such a force was Gords. And to what extent he has been instrumental during these 47 years, in helping to build up this community, none of us can now in a moment measure. Without having had the many advantages offered this present generation: advantages of advanced education along specified lines, he nevertheless entered into the task before him as a builder, a constructive force, with a determination and an ability which could have but one result, success. He reared his own home, and helped many others to rear theirs.

Also in the church Gords was a force for progress. In our church record his name comes first in the list of chartered members, and from the beginning until the end, or as long as his health and strength permitted, he lent his aid and influence as both officer and private in the ranks, to the upbuilding of the church.

As to his personal characteristics, we can say that he was an *individuality* in a very marked degree. He not only followed, he led. He was often a "pathfinder." He dared to think his own thoughts and to do his own deeds. He dared to be original and to have the courage of his convictions. He was molded in an individual mold.

As to his nationality, he belonged to a type which is now, to our great regret, quickly disappearing: the old

sturdy Swedish stock. Moreover, he was not ashamed of his nationality. He disproved, also, most strikingly and forcibly the disparaging statement which is now so often heard, that there is danger in the "hyphen." Gords was a living powerful testimony to the fact that there are within the domains of our land *no citizens more worthy* than those who have come from the shores of the *Teutonic countries* (which include Scandinavia).

His day is now spent, that day of usefulness. We are thankful for what he was and what he did, and we cherish the hope that God in His infinite grace caused to dawn for him another day, which ushered in a new life; a life of larger, higher usefulness, there, where sorrows and suffering, death and decay have no part, for the first things have passed away."

A Twofold Picture.

(Extract from sermon Sunday evening, July 16.)

Text: Rom. VIII. 18—23.

Our text tonight presents to our view and our consideration a twofold picture descriptive of the weal and woe of mankind. It is so graphic, so full of the "real realities" of life, that we stand in rapt attention before it. No artist's brush, with whatever skill it may be wielded, or with whatever degree of intellect and deep and highly developed artistic sense behind it, directing its movements, could set before us a picture more perfect, or bring about a better result as to portraying on the one hand the woes and sufferings of this life, and on the other the happiness and glory of the life beyond. Let us then linger a few moments before this twofold picture. Let us watch, as it were, the Apostle as he unfolds it, as he paints it before our very eyes, in *words,* for it is a *word picture.*

We remember years ago, during our school days, an instance where we had the pleasure to hear and see a reader and a crayon artist working together. As the reader unfolded his story in words, the artist would portray it in colors on the canvas. The last number of the program

was "My Old Kentucky Home." In this instance the soloist of the entertainment group sang the beautiful old song, and as she did so the artist placed it in wonderful effect upon the canvas. There was the greensward, or the lawn, in the foreground, with a rustic fence around it; in the background a clump of trees with shrubbery and underbrush; in the center the home itself in all its simple beauty, quaint, and yet so wonderfully attractive; and above it all the summer moon shown down with a light so mellow, so charming, that it made the entire place look like enchanted ground. You could not imagine the Elysian Fields or the Garden of Eden itself more beautiful than was that old Kentucky home as it appeared before us that evening on the artist's canvas, and as the song and the picture unfolded themselves together, there were few eyes in the audience that were not moist with tears.

In like manner the Apostle paints a picture before us tonight, a twofold picture, which in its deep pathos, depicting the temporal woes of man, and in its rich, warm colors, descriptive of the pure delight of our heavenly home, should bring tears to our eyes—tears of sorrow and regret on the one hand, and tears of joy and intense longing on the other. He begins the picture with these words: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." And he continues and sums it up thus: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, towit, the redëmption of the body."

Could there be a more graphic, more descriptive picture than that of the sufferings of this present time, the woes that have befallen all mankind, and, indeed, the whole creation; which sufferings shall multiply our sorrows as long as we sojourn here upon this earth? Does it not bring us back to the very moment of the fall of man in the Garden of Eden? Can we not see before us most viv-

idly that first unhappy pair, Adam and Eve, with heads bowed low in sorrow and shame as they are driven out of Paradise, whose gates would be shut against them, and upon whose resplendent beauty, whose sweet peace and joy and happiness unalloyed they would look no more, for the angel of God with a flaming sword would guard forevermore the way to the tree of Life.

Can we not see in this picture of human sorrow and woe the agonies of an Abel, as his blood cries up to God from the earth, his brother Cain having risen up against him to slay him in anger and jealousy? Can we not see the people in the time of Noah travailing in sorrow and despair, as God, to avenge their sins, had opened the windows of heaven and the fountains of the deep setting forth a flood that rose and swelled until all flesh had perished save those who were in the Ark? Can we not see the people of Israel suffering the woeful consequences of their sins as they turned away from God to follow after the strange gods of the heathen? Can we not see the masses, during that later period known as the Dark ages, groping in spiritual and mental darkness, crying out in their distress for some one to point out to them once more the way of truth and Life, which seemed to have vanished from their view? Yes, indeed, we can see all this in the picture that the Apostle paints before us to-night.

"But," you say, "why linger among these sad scenes and memories of the dark and gloomy past? Why not take a view of times more recent, times nearer to us than that, even the *present,* the *now?*"

Aye, we will do so if you wish; but do we gain very much thereby? Do these dark, gloomy pictures of human sorrow, suffering, and woe then vanish, leaving before our eyes only such things as can fill our hearts with joy? "Oh, surely," you say, "for we live now in the enlightened 20th century, in an age of civilization and enlightenment. Therefore surely the views of the present time will be more cheerful, more encouraging." Would that it were so! But, alas, such wishes, such dreams, are vain. Let your

eye, or your mind rest for just one brief moment upon the situation, for instance, over there in Europe: those countries which have been known for centuries for their highly developed civilization; which have been seats of learning; cradles of our much boasted modern civilization and culture. Take just one brief look at the situation over there, and what do you see? Do not those countries present to you, to-day, one great panorama of such appalling human suffering and misery that you stand aghast? You stand there speechless, breathless; you cannot find one word with which to begin, even, a description of the suffering you there behold.

Now from that view of *modern times and modern conditions* we turn again to the word picture of our Apostle, to see if there is any similarity: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, even we ourselves groan within ourselves."

There you are. Does not that *correspond* most *minutely* and *perfectly* to the *conditions of to-day?*

How shall we understand it, in the midst of all our civilization and enlightenment? It is because of sin. It is for the same reason that Adam and Eve lamented the fact of a closed Paradise. For the same reason that the blood of Abel cried from the earth to God; that there was travail and sorrow at the time of Noah; that there were lamentations among the people of Israel. Because of *sin* and the *woeful consequences of sin.*

But enough of this! We can look no longer upon such scenes! Let us then for a moment view the other part of the picture portrayed by the Apostle in our evening's text. For we said it was a twofold picture, and so it is. It has a bright side, most wondrously bright and cheering. And that illustrates the truth of the old saying that even the darkest cloud has a silver lining.

Listen! "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*"

Oh, does not that open up to us a vision infinitely more bright and beautiful than the other was dark and gloomy? There is surcease of sorrow for man; there is respite from suffering for God's care-encumbered, sorrow-laden children. The pangs of suffering shall be stilled, the shackles of bondage under sin and woe shall be broken. And in infinitely greater measure than they have here suffered shall the Lord's own know and experience a joy that is unspeakable, a peace that passeth all understanding. "O," you say, "how shall that be brought about?" The Apostle answers that question in the other part of his double-word picture, where he describes us as "waiting for the adoption, towit, the redemption of our body."

That picture opens up to us wonderful vistas of divine redeeming love. We behold here our heavenly Father, whose heart is overflowing with love and mercy, to such an extent that "He gives His only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." We see here, also, the lowly Nazarene, who from His high estate on the right hand of God in heaven came down to earth to "dwell among us full of grace and truth." We see Him going about among sinful men, yea, the Friend of publicans and sinners, offering to them the unspeakable comfort and solace that comes from the assurance of sins forgiven. We see Him on the cross of Golgotha as the "Lamb of God that was slain," a sacrifice for our sins. From His open wounds there flows the cleansing stream that gives health, yea, a new life to sin-sick man.

Yes, all this we see in the second part of the picture which the Apostle presents to us tonight. It reminds us of the words of the same Apostle to the Corinthians: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," "as by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead."

O, may then the lesson of this wonderful twofold picture impress itself indelibly upon our hearts! May we rejoice in that precious truth that the sufferings of this

present time, terrible as they are, are not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

And so may we turn our longing eyes and our hungering hearts away from the appalling vision of present sufferings and woe toward that of eternal happiness and peace. Soon our longing and our hunger shall be satisfied in the full realization of the promise here given: our readoption, through the grace of God, into full heritage of the Estate that was lost through sin, but is now restored through the eternal redemption of Christ.

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"The Rain, Also, Filleth the Pools." (Ps. 84: 6.)

Those words of the Psalmist have been lingering in our mind these days, as we have witnessed the rain in beautiful, copious, refreshing showers descending upon the sunbeaten, thirsty earth. Again and again the showers have fallen and have been drunk up by the soil and the vegetation with an eagerness equal to us humans when perishing from thirst.

Now all are satisfied. The earth "in verdure clad" beams forth upon us with a beauty not of the earth earthly, but reflecting, indeed, the glory of its Maker.

The rain has "filled the pools," and the streams, which were running so low and sluggish, are bubbling over with new energy. The trees and the flowers are radiant once more. All nature is clapping her hands for joy at the blessings that have come with these copious showers.

That reminds us of the Swedish version of this same passage, which reads thüs: "Höstregnet höljer oss med välsignelse." Aye, so it does, and so it has these days. The rain has covered us with blessings; has heaped upon us tokens of God's mercy and love.

And then, too, think of the "showers of blessing" in a spiritual sense that constantly descended upon us from above, from a kind heavenly Father, from Whom, indeed, all blessings flow! So

When nature's astir with new life and joy,
Expressing her pleasure without alloy
In language so powerful, you can't refute—
Shall man be mute?

No, let us sing of the blessings given
By nature's God who dwells in heaven!
From whom all blessings forever flow
To us below.

"Help Wanted."

Again the Fall season is here reminding us all of the fact that we must bend to the tasks before us with renewed energy. And what, then, are the tasks? Looking after the harvest fields of the Lord and gathering in the sheaves. The fields lie before us. Whether or not they are ready for the harvest is a matter we must leave to Him who is the "Lord of harvests." But in the meantime we must *work* with *never flagging zeal,* and it is a work in which we must all unite with concerted efforts. It is not for one or two, or any group of us, to accomplish; we need the services of each and every one. "Every man to his post!" is the watchword, and *more help is wanted.*

Who will enlist? Who will say with the prophet of old: "Here am I, send me?"

Back from the Ozarks.

Male Quartet Returns from Second Trip to Swedeborg, Mo., with New Laurels and a String of very Pleasant Memories.

The great pleasure was again given your humble scribe, Saturday, the 14th, to chaperon the boys of our quartet to the Ozark and Gasconade country, where, in and about the town of Swedeborg, there is, as the name of the town indicates, a Swedish Settlement with a Lutheran church and congregation.

We will not this time detail the incidents of the trip, as they were largely on the same order as those of our former visit a year and a half ago, with, however, the

"prairie schooner" trip from Crocker to Swedeborg left out. The trip itself, as well as our stay in the Ozark town, was such as shall linger in the amber of memory for some time to come.

Sunday morning divine services were held, the quartet leading the singing, and rendering two special numbers very suitable to the occasion.

In the evening the concert was given, and we must say that our heart grew warm within us at the sight of the large and appreciative audience that greeted us. It was a full house, *plus,* and that notwithstanding the fact that the roads were very muddy and the night was dark, with heavy clouds threatening more rain.

The program, twelve numbers in all, some of them double numbers, consisted of quartets, vocal solos, violin solos, and an address by the pastor. Miss Lillian Black of Swedeborg played the accompaniments for the vocal and instrumental solos, and also sang a solo, Lawrence Nelson playing the violin obligato.

Had the concert been given otherwheres than in church, we have no doubt each number would have been favored with voluminous applause. As it was, the applause was none the less evident in the appreciative looks of the audience. The appreciation was also evidenced in the collection taken up, which contained several dollars, half dollars, and quarters, and totaled a very creditable sum.

During our stay in Swedeborg, we were most royally entertained at the homes of Mr. and Mrs. Jacobson, Mesdames Nelson, Ström and Sundquist, and Mr. and Mrs. Sam Black. We are quite at a loss to know how to requite all their kindness and hospitality.

As we were leaving on the night train, 2:28 A. M., we were wondering how to spend the intervening time after the close of the program.

This problem was, to the great delight of the boys and their chaperon, solved by Mr. Black and his estimable family, who opened their doors and gave us *"carte blanche"* of their entire commodious house. Here, under the in-

fluence of lively, interesting conversation, music and song, the hours sped by as with wings, and it was with regret we noted that the time for departure was at hand. Before leaving, however, Mrs. Black, assisted by her daughter, served a luncheon such as put a rare and exquisite finish to our long line of enjoyments. To say nothing of the other delicacies offered, there were strawberries fresh from the garden on Mr. Black's premises. Home grown strawberries at this season of the year, together with cream that *was "cream!"* The ambrosia of the Olympian gods would have suffered in comparison with such dainties.

While on the subject of savory edibles, we must not forget to mention the sumptuous dinners, with fried spring chicken and the like, to which we were treated by Jacobsons, Sundquists, and Ströms, and also the refreshing luncheon served by Mrs. Nelson Saturday afternoon, when we, travel-stained and hungry, stepped off the Frisco train. —

There were scores of pleasant incidents fresh in our memory, as at last, in the stilly night (2:28 A. M.), we boarded the east bound train for our return trip; and as the last faint outline of Swedeborg faded from view as the train dashed on around the curve, the boys grew melancholy, and we heard them sigh: "Alas, and will those days return?" Then they grew cheerful again, for *"hope springs eternal in the human breast."*

Again, many thanks to all our friends at Swedeborg.

The Time for Work.

Should any one ponder the question as to when we ought to work for the welfare and development of our church, we have here an answer:

In the first place we wish to say that the time to work for our church is *all the time.* There is no time within the twelve months or the 365 days which comprise a year, when we, as church members, can consistently and justifiedly stand aside and put our hands in our pockets and leave the

work to take care of itself. The *faithful* member knows this, and there is, therefore, no lagging in his zeal.

But though the time for church work is all the time, there are certain seasons which we may say offer splendid opportunities for *extra endeavors.* We are *now* in the midst of one of those seasons. We can no longer make the excuses so often heard in July and August: "It's too hot to work." The air is now bracing and invigorating. We feel the red blood pulsating with accelerated speed through our veins. The genius of work and endeavor is in the very air. Then let the atmosphere of our church, also, be permeated with the same spirit!

Then, too, we are approaching the "year end" festivals: Thanksgiving, and Advent, with the glorious climax, Christmas. Does not that call forth the best there's in us? It should, and we believe it will.

So let us remember that the time to work for our church is *all the time,* and the *more especial time* is *just now.*

Our Great Opportunity.

By the time this issue of the MESSENGER is in the hands of its readers, we will be in the midst of the Christmas season, celebrating the coming of the Prince of Peace, on which glorious day, two thousand years ago, the heavenly hosts proclaimed "peace on earth, good will toward men." And now on the eve of that blessed season there comes from the center of that awful boiling pot of strife and bloodshed and carnage on the European Continent proposals suggestive of peace. Could there be anything more opportune, more appropriate, and more in harmony with the feelings and longings of millions of people all over the world than just now to bring about the dawn of peace?

But, alas, some peoples and nations seem not yet to be satisfied. They fling defiance in the face of any and all who dare to speak of peace. Even here in our own country there are jingo voices making utterances like these:

"The United States is not to be stampeded into efforts to make peace."

For over two years we have been aiding in steeping the countries of Europe in blood and promoting a carnage never before known in the annals of human history.

Is it not yet enough? May those who have the shaping of the future destiny of our beloved country in their hands think well before they throw away their renewed opportunity to work for peace! May those who "have kept us out of war" (?) now apply their hearts unto wisdom, lest to satisfy a few greedy grasping men, who are fattening upon the woes of millions of their brethren, they let this opportunity to lend their influence toward peace slip by.

Allow us in this connection to call attention to the open letter recently made public addressed to Mr. Wilson by his friend and biographer, Wm. Bayard Hale, in which letter he points out the fact that now has come the opportunity for the President of this country to champion the cause of peace. The world to-day is looking to America with a hope that this may be done.

May we, therefore, as a nation apply our hearts unto wisdom 'ere the hand-writing on the wall: "Mene mene tekel" shall appear and the judgment of old be registered against us—"weighed in the balance and found wanting."

"Tack för God Vakt!"

The MESSENGER is now completing its fifth year. In January, 1912, it made its début among the people of our church and their friends, here in St. Louis and otherwheres. Since then it has regularly and faithfully made its monthly visits. As was expressed in the first issue, we believe a publication of this kind has an important mission to fill. The MESSENGER has striven to fill that mission to the best of its ability under the circumstances.

The publication of a paper is not the easy task it may seem, when the duties of editor, business manager, solici-

tor of ads, collection department, mailing department and circulation manager all fall upon one person, who already has his hands full of other highly important work.

But we are glad to note the words of appreciation that have often come, not only from our constituents locally, but also from readers in many parts of our synod. For all such evidence of appreciation and good will and moral support, we voice, hereby, our thanks.

We have endeavored to promote primarily the welfare of our local church, but also the best interests and characteristics of our Swedish American people in general; and if in any small degree we have succeeded therein, we consider our time and labor well spent.

And now as we close this year and the fifth year of the MESSENGER'S activities, we say to all our readers, in good old Swedish: *"Tack för god vakt!"*

PART VI. 1917.

The Prospect.

Since this is the great year when Protestants all over the world will be celebrating the events and rejoicing in the blessings of the Lutheran Reformation of the 16th century, it is very gratifying to note that our local congregation is beginning the year with the brightest prospects before it. Never before did we take up a new year's work under more favorable circumstances, or with more telling results of our efforts. Through the envelope system and the offerings the income, through regular channels, was a little more than doubled during 1916—a 59.2% increase. (See Treasurer's report). The returns thus far received from the work of our Finance Committee indicate a further considerable increase for 1917. The Ladies' Aid and the Luther League have also very creditable sums to show for their year's work.

In the Sunday School there is a steady increased attendance. On the last three Sundays the capacity of the Sunday-school room has been taxed to the limit. Everything bears witness to the fact that this will be, indeed, the "Jubilee Year" in our local church, as well as in the Protestant world.

For all this we render our thanks unto Him, who is the Lord of harvests, and from whom all blessings flow.

"Behold and See."

Again we have entered upon the season of Lent, which brings to us the sacred memories from Gethsemane and Golgotha. Memories of suffering, of agonies, indescribable in their intensity, and in their purpose and merits far-reaching beyond our ability to express. It is the agonies of our Saviour that are brought before our inner vision during these weeks of Lent. We see Him in Gethsemane

and on His way to Golgotha bending low under the burden of a world of sin, which burden He had come to remove at the expense of His own life. Well might we say with the Prophet of old: "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow."

But the vital question for us to ponder is this: Shall these agonies of our blessed Saviour, borne vicariously, to remove from us the condemnation of sin, be lost upon us by reason of our own hardness of heart, and indifference to our own eternal welfare? Shall we look upon the bruised and bleeding Lamb of God as we gaze for a moment upon any other striking object or event, only to turn away in forgetfulness to chase as before the various phantoms which are leading us on ever nearer to the inevitable result, a final, eternal separation from God?

God grant it may not be so; but that we, awake to the blessed privilege again given us in this renewed opportunity of Lent, may be drawn closer to Him, who through infinite suffering paved the way for us to eternal life: yea, who died that we might live!

"Let us Break Their Bands Asunder!"

As we pen these lines (on February 22) we cannot but make the following reflections: This is George Washington's birthday, and the Stars and Stripes are floating from the pinnacles of the homes and public buildings of this city and all over the land in honor of him whom we proudly call the "Father of His Country." At the same time we read in our daily papers that thousands of people in New York and other large cities are suffering from the want of food and are at the point of starvation. We are also told that it is not because of lack of food supplies in the country, nor from lack of employment—both are plentiful. But the powers that be are holding the food supply stored up, inaccessible to the people, that the so-called war prices may continue indefinitely to soar to the limitless enrichment of the few who have the power to control the market

and bring about such a state. And so an ever increasing number of sovereign citizens of this "Land of the *Free*" are daily arriving at the point of starvation. Now, if George Washington, who laid down his life work and would have spilled his life blood to rid his country of oppression, were here among us today, what would he *say* and *do?* Without the shadow of a doubt he would call this present state of affairs a worse oppression, at least a worse *form* of oppression, than that which he fought to remove. His soldiers were at one time hungering and freezing at Valley Forge. But that was under the existing circumstances unavoidable, and it was for a great and glorious cause. *But for what cause are these thousands of our citizens starving and freezing today?* Can any one answer? Let those attempt it who lent their influence recently to bring about such a state of—"prosperity"! Would that we had a George Washington and an Abraham Lincoln today, that the most *humiliating* yoke of oppression of all might be lifted, and this bondage in which the very sovereign citizens of our fair land are now groaning might be torn asunder! But if men will not, God will. He says: "Let us break their bands asunder!"

What is Easter to You?

By the time this issue of the MESSENGER is in the hands of its readers, we will be approaching the Easter Festival. Unsought the question comes to us: Are we prepared to celebrate it in the true Easter spirit? Will our hearts respond with full accord to the message that comes to us from the Holy Sepulchre, whose empty vault speaks of the triumph of the Crucified One?—A triumph, not only over those who nailed Him to the cross, or who, looking on, or passing by, shook their heads in derision: not only over the Roman guard, who so zealously watched the place where Jesus lay; but a triumph over *sin*, and *death*, and the *gates of hell*. Will our hearts rightly respond to such tidings?

During these weeks of Lent we have lingered with our Master in His hours of sorrow and suffering. We have heard Him groaning under the burden that He bore. We have seen Him agonizing in the Garden; meeting with marvelous calm and patience the taunts and the jeers, the stripes and the blows of the angry mob, before the tribunals of Caiaphas and Pilate. We have seen Him drain the cup of gall, and heard Him from the cross of Calvary, with His last breath, utter that wonderful prayer for His vilest enemies. Has all this had any influence upon us? Has the voice of our conscience in shame brought us low in the dust where we belong, as we comprehended the truth—It was for me, for *me?* Are these our sentiments:

"Alas and did my Saviour bleed?
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred Head
For such a worm as I?"

Or do we still hold our heads aloft in self-exaltation? Do pride and vanity yet rule our hearts?

If the latter is true, then Easter has no significance for us. It is only a gala day, and the grand occasion when we go on dress parade to display our Easter bonnets and our new spring coats. But if the solemn truths of Lent have found response in our hearts, then we are prepared to join in the triumphs of Easter. Then that glorious Festival will have for us its true significance. For then we know that from the depths of degradation, through sin, we have been exalted *with* and *by* our *Lord Triumphant,* "who was *delivered* for *our offences,* and was *raised again* for *our justification.*" (Rom. 4: 25.)

God grant that Easter may have *this significance* to you and me!

Be Ye Also Ready!

What! are we preaching preparedness? Yes, most emphatically. The same preparedness as we have always been preaching, only we would now emphasize it an hun-

dredfold as we see the forces, the powers and principalities, against which every Christian, every man, woman, and child, who hopes for eternal salvation, must contend, massing their strength for the final onslaught. Then we would preach preparedness with tongues of fire; then we would say with clarion tones that might shake the lethargy and the down from the hearts and the eyes of those who are asleep: *Be ye also ready!*

But lest our words go entirely unheeded—for we are aware of the fact that the servants of the Lord are in these times accounted as nothing, and that their messages are often poured into ears that are stopped, so that we may well say with the prophet of old: "Who has believed our report?"—therefore, lest these words of *ours* go entirely unheeded, we will let the *Master* himself speak. To be sure, even He was, and is, scorned and scoffed at; and yet the time is coming, and may not be far distant, when "every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord."

Therefore, will you listen to Him *now,* before it is too late? And we will only add this: Do you see in *recent events* any *similarity* to, nay, the *fulfillment* of what He here describes?

This is what He says (Matth. 24.), the disciples having asked what would be the signs of His coming and the end of the world: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, 'Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of *wars* and *rumors of wars:* see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For *nation shall rise against nation,* and *kingdom against kingdom:* and there shall be *famine* and pestilences, and *earthquakes,* in divers places. All these are the *beginning of sorrows.*

Then shalt they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations from my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And

many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because *iniquity shall abound,* the *love of many* shall *wax cold.* But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.—For then shall be *great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time,* no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elects sake those days shall be shortened.

Now learn a parable from the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: *So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.*

But as the days of Noe, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.—But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

Therefore, *be ye also ready:* for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

The Lutheran Church.

In this Jubilee Year, the Quadricentennial of the Lutheran Reformation, it is well to refresh our memory as to some historical facts concerning the Lutheran Church in this country. Did you ever stop to think that the *first Lutheran* in America was a *Swede,* and that the first congregation that assembled here in the country to worship according to the Lutheran Faith was a Swedish congregation? Here are some of the facts:

Rev. Torkillus was the first Lutheran pastor in America. He came with the expedition of Swedish Lutherans in 1638. These Swedish colonists, led by Peter Minuit, bought land of the Indians west of the Delaware

River and Bay, and called it New Sweden. Fort Christina (in Delaware, near Wilmington) was built, and here is where the first Lutheran congregation worshiped in the New World. Fort Christina was named in honor of Gustavus Adolphus' daughter Christina. Rev. Torkillus died at Fort Christina in 1643. His body lies buried at the south wall of the oldest existing Lutheran church-house in America—the "Old Swedish Church" at Wilmington, Dela. This church was built about the year 1680.

The history of the Lutheran Church in America comes down from Colonial times. Americans are an amalgamation of many nations; so is the Lutheran Church, which today, while making the language of the country prominent, preaches the Gospel in the Land of Washington in at least seventeen languages.

The Lutheran Church is the largest Protestant body in the world and the third largest Protestant denomination in the United States. It has had the most rapid growth in the last 30 years of any Protestant denomination, and has today a confirmed adult membership of 2,445,276. It has 9,831 ministers and 15,077 congregations.

Sola Fide.

Now, dear reader, do not become alarmed; the above term is not as incomprehensible as it may seem, even if it is not English.

It is simply a Latin term meaning *by faith alone.*

"But," you say, "it seems to smack of dogmatics, or something similarly tedious. The heading itself forebodes that what follows will be an arid doctrinal dissertation, and with such matters we are not concerned." If the latter is true (that you are not interested in doctrine), which we hope not, that is your *loss;* for surely if we are Christians, as we profess to be, we should *know* the *Christian doctrines,* so that we may be able truthfully to say with the Lord's servant of old: "I *know* in whom I believe." Is it too much to ask that we *acquaint ourselves with the way* of sal-

vation, if we wish to be saved? Then, too, we should know the particular doctrines of *our own church.*

We hear much about patriotism these days, and that person is at once assailed who does not at all times and in all possible ways stand up for, not only the country, but also *those who for the time being have the power to rule* — whether *right or wrong.*

Now our church is *right,* for it is in all things founded upon the unchangeable and irrefutable Word of God. Should not every member, then, have the patriotism first to *acquaint himself* with the doctrines of his own church, and then *stand up for them* at all times, and in the face of all opposition from the world?

May that patriotism be found among us!

Now we are not here going to enter into any doctrinal discussion, for space does not allow. We simply want to direct your attention to this phrase, *"sola fide,"* which has come down to us from the days of the Reformation (originally, of course, from the Word of God), and which is one of the *fundamental principles* of our church. By *faith alone,* not by *works,* nor any merits of our own, are we *justified.*

Then, too, the same principle holds good in regard to our daily church work and its results. The work and the results thereof will *measure up* to our *faith.* We can expect nothing more, for faith is the *mainspring* of our work, and we know that a stream does not flow higher than its fountain head. If our faith therefore is weak, wavering between fervor at times and lukewarmness and uncertainty, or something worse, at other times, what result can we expect from our work?

So let us *work,* by all means. From the most important duty, that of preaching the Gospel, down to the least and seemingly most insignificant detail of our manifold activities, let us *work;* yet remembering this truth: "Not by *might,* nor by *power,* but by *my spirit,* saith the Lord." Let us work as if all depended upon our *efforts,* and let us *pray* as if all depended upon our *prayer* and our

faith in Him who heareth prayer. *"Sola fide"*—be that our watchword!

"When I Can Read My Title Clear."

We live in a mercenary age. To further one's own material interests and lay hold of as big a slice as possible of this world and its goods by whatever means, fair or foul, is the one consuming passion of an ever-growing multitude. Particularly is this true of those who through a combination of circumstances hold the power to do as they will. These hold much under their despotic sway, to which they could not "read their title clear," if only Justice had a chance.

This matter of *"title"* is a vital question, and plays an important part in many of your dealings. For instance, if you are about to make a real estate transaction, to purchase a piece of real estate, you take the precaution to have the title to said property investigated. Nor do you take any man's word for it. You employ a "Title Guarantee Company" in which you have implicit faith. Should the title be found faulty, i. e., not clear, you cancel at once the transaction. You will not hazard your money on anything that is uncertain. That is good common sense as well as business sagacity.

Considering now the above facts, we cannot but make the following reflections: How much wiser, and also more ambitious man is in matters pertaining to his *material welfare*, than in *spiritual things!* What foresight, what care, what skill, what energy he displays, when his *temporal interests* are at stake! And yet how *careless* and *indifferent* in regard to those things by which his eternal destiny is determined; matters of his immortal soul!

"There is a Building not made by hands, eternal in the heavens." Can you read the title to it clear; as clear as the title to the piece of property you may own, or that you are about to buy or sell? If you cannot, the fault is your own. The title to that Eternal Estate was made clear

to man once for all, when all the "debts," and "liens," and "defalcations" of man's own making were *wiped out* by the *blood of the Lamb.*

But do you care enough for that Estate to investigate your chances of obtaining it? Is that question of any value to you? Is it worth a little thought and consideration on your part? Or are you too busy looking up *material titles,* which may guarantee your future prosperity here on earth, to consider Him who at the cost of His own life *guaranteed to you a clear title*—if you will but accept it—to treasures "that fade not away; which moth and rust do not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal."

"When you can read your title clear to mansions in the skies"—may that be the moment most eagerly sought and most earnestly longed for, dear friend!

A Life to the Glory of God.

Text: II. Cor. 5: 15.

(Preached at an Annual Conference.)

"I seek not mine own glory." We read those words in the 50th verse of the 8th chapter of the Gospel of St. John. They were spoken by Jesus in answer to the jews, who were zealously seeking a cause, or rather pretense, for accusing Him and discrediting Him to the extent that they would be justified in the eyes of the people to put Him out of the way. For some time He had been at work fulfilling His Messianic calling. In harmony with His divine mission of love, grace, and mercy unto salvation, He had gone about doing good and healing all that were oppressed. In Judea and Galilee He had wrought His work to the great and everlasting glory of God. Even the despised Samaritans had not been overlooked or neglected in His ministry, for, being no respecter of persons, He had gone thither and had broken the Bread of Life to the hungry; had offered the Water of Life to those that were athirst, even among them. He had garnered the grain that was white unto harvest with the care of the true husbandman; nay,

with the burning zeal of the Harvester of souls. Not only had He preached the Gospel, and brought to the people its gladsome tidings of salvation; He had also wrought His miracles, proving thereby His divine origin and power: as at Cana, where He turned water into wine; on the mountainside by the sea of Galilee, where He fed the multitude; at Capernaum, where the nobleman's son, through His omnipotent word, was made whole; and at the pool of Bethesda, near Jerusalem, where the infirm man was healed of his infirmities. As a result of these works, many had begun to believe on Jesus and to accept Him as the one sent of the Father, the Saviour of the world.

But this, together with the fact that Jesus had on several occasions declared the divine truth to the disclosure of the insincerity and hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, had aroused their sore displeasure; and they gave vent to their hatred by hurling at Him a broadside of invective, reaching the climax with these words: "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil?" But Jesus with that calm, quiet dignity, which always characterized His words and actions, and which disclosed His divine nature and attributes, answered them and said: "I have not a devil; but I honor my Father, and ye do dishonor me. And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth."

Now, if Jesus in all His works sought not His own glory, but the glory of Him who sent Him, and whose cause He represented here on earth, namely the Father; then the same should be true of us, who bear the name of Christ, and who are His disciples and co-laborers. For we should follow in His footsteps. His divine example should ever be before our eyes, and our one great aim should be to follow it.

Nevertheless, human nature is weak. It is so easy to consider first, and seek first, one's own glory. We need, therefore, constantly to remind one another of our weaknesses, and also of our duty in that respect, that we might by united efforts, bearing one another's burdens, come

closer day by day to the "making of our calling and election sure." It was no doubt in view of this recognized need of united efforts in fulfilling our calling, that we have been given at this meeting subjects to consider like the following: *"A Life to the Glory of God."*

Now we will say, before proceeding, that were we addressing any other body than a *religious body*, and were we seeking our own glory, with an eye to personal popularity, then we would think twice before speaking on a subject like this. For if there is anything in our day *unpopular in the eyes of the world*, yea, even among many of those who would very strongly resent being classified with the worldly-minded, it is just this: *"A Life to the Glory of God."* Such a life is so *directly in opposition* to what *they consider life should be*, and any person who attempts to follow in his Master's footsteps, and to live unto the glory of God, is simply considered a fool.

Self-aggrandizement is the propaganda of our age. "Live unto *yourself* and *your own glory*," is the daily program of the worldly wise; and their wisdom seems to be the only recognized wisdom in this "greatly illumined" age.

That tendency toward self-aggrandizement is evident in all walks of life. There's the business man: He works and plans and figures and invents shrewd methods by which to catch the trade, that he might, through his business, gather fortunes, wax wealthy and independent—to what end? Is it that he might by his wealth and influence be a means of uplifting humanity by promoting the Kingdom of God? Is it that he might, unhampered by poverty, render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God's? No. It is rather to render unto Caesar *everything*, to the utter exclusion of God and His cause. In other words, he *"labors for the meat that perisheth"*. The end of his business cunning and shrewdness is personal power and influence, honor and glory.

"But," you say, "this is doing the business man a great injustice. Think of the vast amount of philanthropy practiced by some of these men!" Yes, there is some work

of that sort being done, often in a very exaggerated form. For instance: One scatters *libraries* broadcast over the land—"A great work!" But what is the underlying motive? Is it done to the glory of God? Scarcely. It is only raising so many monuments to one's own fame and glory. The idea is that the present generation and generations to come, when beholding one of those structures, might say: "That was built by so and so"; "that fine building is a gift from the *great philanthropist, Mr. Millionworth.*" What about the millions of downtrodden poor, crushed under the loudly rumbling wheels of the *"Juggernaut"* of *selfish commercialism,* of *high finance,* of *privileged monopolies?* What, we ask again, about the millions of benighted souls, perishing in spiritual darkness, who through the maintenance of missions and missionaries could be saved from the unspeakable fate of temporal and eternal darkness and death? By using at least a part of their enormous fortunes to help such needy, these *so-called "philanthropists" could live to the glory of God.*

Another builds and endows universities. "O, what a noble deed!" But when you realize that those same universities are hotbeds of *Rationalism,* where *negative theology* enjoys a most luxuriant growth; that they are institutions where infidel ideas and doctrines are fostered, and where the divine truths of the Holy Scriptures, upon which rests the Kingdom of God, are trodden under foot; then you can scarcely call those munificent gifts a part of a life to the glory of God.

Another of these great philanthropists takes up the hobby of giving away pipe organs to certain favored churches. *"Very* good and noble!" And as the worshipers gather on the Sabbath morning, and the tones of the organ peal forth, they raise their voices in *loud hosannas,* not to Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, but to the *donor* of the elegant instrument, the beauty and richness of tone of which occupies their thoughts, until they have entirely forgotten to sing the praises of God, from whom all blessings flow.

In the political sphere we find the same tendency to

self-aggrandizement. Those who by their constituents have been invested with power and influence very often use that power and influence not in the interest of civic righteousness, but in the interests of the *favored few*, the "*privileged class*" to which they themselves now belong. They are untrue to their trust for the sake of self-aggrandizement, and so they forget the truth that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

And so we could go on throughout the various walks of life, showing how the great, all-o'ershadowing motive underlying the deeds of men is *not* the *glory of God*, but the *promotion* of *self-glory*. Of course there are *exceptions*, but these only *prove the rule*. Even within the church and on the field of Christian endeavor, to our shame be it said, the glory of God is sometimes lost sight of under the insatiable passion for self-aggrandizement. We will possibly come back to that a little later.

We see from what has already been said, and from our daily observations, if we are awake to the signs of the times, that the subject before us this evening is very unpopular, especially from the viewpoint of the world. But now we have here a religious body, a gathering of Christian men and women, and therefore we can freely discuss this subject without being considered foolish, but with the hope that the proposition here given, "a life to the glory of God," will find a ready response.

To live a life to the glory of God is the duty, as well as the blessed privilege of every one who lays claim to fellowship with Christ. And it is a duty, to neglect which would mean the grossest disregard of God's mercy and love, revealed and offered through Christ. If we consider at all what God has done for us, then how can we evade the duty to at least try to live unto His glory? And it is upon that ground the proposition of our text is made.

Paul appeals to the Christians at Corinth to live unto Christ on the *ground of what He has done for them*. He says: "And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him

which died for them, and rose again." Can we dwell upon those facts, the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, which were endured for our sake? Can we behold that Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, meekly led forth to the slaughter? Can we look upon that bruised and bleeding form, nailed to the tree of condemnation because of our iniquities, and yet remain unmoved, feeling in our hearts no burning desire to take up the cross in His footsteps, and to consecrate our every talent of body, mind, and soul to His service, living unto His glory? As we said a moment ago, the person who can do that; remain unmoved, and continue to live to himself and the world in the face of that overwhelming truth that Christ has died for him, must be a human monstrosity. But such is the result of sin; it does make *monsters* of those who were once created in God's own image.

"But," you say, "granting that it is our *duty* to live to the glory of God; is it *possible* to do so? However much we may desire to live such lives, can we accomplish it, in view of our own natural weakness, and besetting temptations? The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is weak." That is certainly true, and the person who claims to be living a life to the glory of God without encountering any difficulties; without experiencing that struggle between the spirit and the flesh, cannot be sincere in his profession. A true servant of the Lord will encounter opposition, not only from the world, but also from his own flesh. Christ forewarned His disciples thereof with these words: "In this world ye shall have tribulation." John says: "Marvel not, brethren, that the world hates you." Luther teaches that the old Adam within us, i. e., our own flesh, must be subjected to a daily crucifixion. So we must not expect to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease." *Opposition is inevitable.* There *must be* a *daily struggle* against the forces that would hinder us from living unto God. But it *is possible* for us to *meet that opposition* and to *overcome it;* not in our own strength, but by the power of Him who has called us. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my

spirit, saith the Lord." God requires nothing impossible of us. He is a just God. He will therefore see to it that we are not tempted beyond our ability, through His grace, to withstand. And they who fail in this struggle do so because of their neglect to harness themselves with the strength of the Lord, which overcometh all obstacles. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles." (Isaiah 40: 31).

"A Life to the Glory of God"—what does that mean? Can we define it, or show what such a life is? Let us see. It means, as the Apostle here says, living not unto ourself, but unto the Lord. We can illustrate best by using examples from the Holy Scriptures. The one example, which towers infinitely above all others, is the Master, Jesus Himself. And as we said in the beginning, that is the example which should be ever before our eyes. Did He live unto Himself, for the promotion of His own interests? No, indeed, He lived to the glory of God and for the eternal welfare of His fellow-men; even the sinful, those lost in transgressions and sins. He was the Friend of the publicans and sinners, and continued so to be even when the Scribes and Pharisees in their self-righteousness reviled Him for it. Let us look for a moment upon that beautiful example of a life to the glory of God. Invested with divine attributes, and possessing all power in heaven and on earth, He humbled Himself, came down to this earth and took up His abode among sinful men. Under the deepest humiliation, and subjected to a relentless persecution, He went about working out the redemption of a fallen race. Was there ever any thought of self-glory? Did He ever consider His personal interests, or how He might in any way spare Himself? No, with undying zeal and faithfulness to His heavenly Father and the interests of the Kingdom, He went about from place to place, from village to village, from city to city, helping all that were oppressed. In the temple of Jerusalem, along the shores of the Galilee, and even among the hamlets of the despised Samaritans, we trace the footsteps of the lowly Nazarene

and the results of His ministry, as He caused the eyes of the blind to be opened, the ears of the deaf to be unstopped, the lepers to be cleansed, and the tombs to release their dead. Unmindful of Himself, He labored for the glory of God and the redemption of His fellow-men.

Let us follow that "Man of sorrows" on His *via dolorosa* across the dark vale of Kidron on to Gethsemane, where He "treads the winepress *alone*," where He bears upon His shoulders the burden of a *world of sin*. We stand beneath the cross on Golgotha as the shadows deepen; we look up at the bruised and bleeding form, and hear Him groaning: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!" And the words of the prophet come to us: "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow."

The parched lips move, and we hear the words: "It is finished." The very foundations of the earth tremble; the veil of the temple, and even the rocks, are rent asunder; the tombs are opened, and the dead go forth unto life.—

"It is finished," indeed! The "Rock of Ages" has been cleft for you and me, and in its bosom we find a safe retreat from sin and death, yea, from the powers of hell.

Such was the life of the *Master*, who towers infinitely above all others as an example of a life to the glory of God.

Then there are other examples; the prophets and the apostles. "But," you say, "that was but natural. They had received a special calling, and were invested with special power." Yes, but there are examples of others, who were neither prophets nor apostles. The Scriptures also by way of contrast give examples of those who lived unto themselves. We will take a look at some of these, for we often see the truth best by way of comparisons and contrasts. There was the wealthy husbandman, the rich farmer, who had many fields and raised immense crops, which he stored up in cribs and graneries—for *"higher prices"*—. But he was greedy and therefore not satisfied with his present resources. His graneries were not large enough to hold all the grain until he could sell it at the *"top market*

price." As it was, he might have to sell a part of his store at moderate prices, in order to make room for new crops, and that would never do. Think what a loss that would mean! So he said to himself: "I will build larger granaries." And so he did, and filled them to their utmost capacity. Then he said to his soul: "Soul, much good hast thou stored up unto this day; now make thyself days of ease, *eat, drink,* and *be merry.*" Was that man living unto the Lord, or unto himself and the gratification of his selfish desires? To himself. Yes, that is the program of the world to this day. *"Eat, drink, and be merry."* That is the only kind of a life they consider worth while, but it is the very opposite from a life to the glory of God.

Then there was the rich young ruler, who seemed to have taken the question of his soul's salvation very seriously; so much so that he came to Jesus and said: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus told him what to do: "Go sell that thou hast and give the poor, and come and follow me, and thou shalt receive a treasure in heaven." But the evangelist tells us that when the young man heard this he went away—and he didn't return. Why? Because, when it came to the point, he did not want to live to the Lord. It was too great a sacrifice of personal comforts, and personal interests.

Then, again, there was the young man who suddenly woke up to the realization, as he thought, that his home was not what it ought to be—though he had enjoyed every advantage and privilege that any young man could reasonably expect. He was not satisfied. He wanted more liberty; more opportunities to enjoy himself in the world. And so he went to his father one day and requested his share of the estate. His father granted the request. But no sooner had this been done, than the son gathered all together and took his journey into a far-away country, and there—what did he do? *Wasted* his substance and himself in riotous living. Was that young man living to the Lord, or to himself? "Oh," you say, "to himself." Yes, thus far. But there came a time when things had changed. When

he had spent all and was vainly striving to sustain himself on the husks that were fed to the swine, he came to himself; he woke up to a realization of his great mistake and his great sin. He remembered his father's house, where even the servants had bread enough and to spare, while he was perishing from hunger. And he said: "I will arise and go to my father." Now, dear friends, *that young man was beginning to live unto the Lord.* And when the father pressed the returning, penitent prodigal to his bosom, he burst out in exclamations of joy, saying: "Let us rejoice and be glad, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

Just one more example. According to His custom, Jesus had on a Sabbath attended public worship. As the people were passing out from the temple, He observed how they gave their alms. One poor widow came along and contributed two mites—less in value than two of our pennies.—"Well," you say, "that wasn't very much to give in the collection." That depends, my friend, upon the circumstances and the spirit in which it is given. And it was considerably more than a great many give even in our day, in this age of affluence, because they are not at church on Sunday, and so give *nothing.* While divine services are going on at the church, they are at home reading the "funny paper," or have gone out to spend the day at some place of amusement; which is another example of a life to oneself. But let us return to the story of the widow. Jesus said that she gave more than all the others, because the two mites was *all she had.* They represented *all her wealth,* her *entire fortune.* Yet she gave it *willingly, gladly,* and with perfect trust in the Lord, that He would provide. Now, was that widow living unto herself or unto the Lord? "Oh," you say, *"surely* she was living *unto the Lord."* Yes, indeed. Where are those today who can be classified with that widow? There *may be* some such, but we have yet to see one. To live wholly and unreservedly to the Lord is getting to be something very rare in our day.

Is it then very important that we live to the glory of

God? Does the Lord really care? Indeed He does. And He has done all to make it possible for us to live unto Him. *"And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again."*

But there are scorners, such who scoff at the idea of a life unto God. They say derisively: "What do we care, whether we live unto God or not? Nay, we will not. We propose to live *just as we please."* Let such scoff and deride, but see to it, dear friend, that you have no part with them; for the day of reckoning is coming, when all these shall speedily be brought low, and their end shall be an end of woe. Paul says in his letter to the Romans: "For it is written; as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." *Every knee* shall *bow, willing or not; every tongue, willing or not,* shall *confess to God."*

Dear friend, which then will you choose: to live unto yourself, or to the glory of God?

A life to the glory of God means not necessarily a life of *great deeds* that win the praise of men. God looks not only upon the surface, but beneath it, to the *heart.* As in the case of the widow and her two mites, He judges from the *motive* and the *spirit* of the deed, not its magnitude. By a *consecrated faithful use of the talents we have, whether great or small,* we can live a life to the glory of God.

We said a moment ago that even in the church the duty to live to the glory of God is sometimes lost sight of. Let us give an example or two. Not infrequently we hear, or read, of some church that has enjoyed an unusual growth. Why, it has been quite doubled as to membership within the space of a few months! All rise up at once to do homage to such a church and such workers, who have been able to achieve such remarkable and unprecedented success. While other churches, whose growth is only normal, or perhaps even a little slow, but where *just as hard, earnest, consecrated, and selfsacrificing work* has been done, are looked at askance, and there are possibly murmurings

and complaints. Now, if an investigation were made, we would find that in the former instance the growth in membership was attained by the setting aside of some of the most important rules and principles of our church. Our church *has certain rules of faith,* of *conduct,* and rules also that *govern its growth.* (See church constitution.) But by setting these aside and throwing even the teachings of the *Word of God,* in that respect, to the winds, it is very possible that every one of us could fill our churches to overflowing. But in *that case* we would *not be living and working to the glory of God.* There are some pastors who will not stoop to such methods; but who in their work consider the *glory of God*—and He is glorified when *His word is obeyed*—though it means a congregation of very limited membership, and though he himself be considered a *failure* in the eyes of the multitude, who can see only the things that appear on the surface. There are times in the life of every Christian, a pastor in particular, when he *must have the courage of his convictions;* when he *must "dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone."*

One more example: The church is sometimes led into the temptation of building monuments to itself of stone and brick and mortar; monuments to the great zeal and ability, activity, and skill of some of its members and leaders. These may bear the name of "charitable institutions," but are, in the first place, to a great extent at least, *business* enterprises. Moreover, the assistance they render is *material, physical,* which, surely, no one will deny, should be a *secondary matter* among us as a church. But so much ado is often made about such enterprises that we are involuntarily reminded of the fifth chapter of our Bible History. Little wonder that there often is, under such circumstances, so great a "babel of voices" and "confusion of tongues" and ideas as to what constitutes our *major duty and calling as a church.* Yea, this thing of rearing *material monuments* to our *business ingenuity* and skill can become so very interesting, and seem so important, that we come nigh to forgetting that our *first and*

main duty and calling as a church is the *building of a temple unto God,* not in granite, or brick and mortar, but of *"living stones"; the precious, imperishable souls of men, won through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified.*

O, dear friends and fellow-laborers, may we see our duty and calling clear, as God has given it to us, and then bend our every effort toward its accomplishment!

We cannot do it in our own strength, but in *His* strength, and through faith and prayer. That is a mighty agency, which can do wonders. The Apostle says that the heroes of the faith of the Old Testament through faith and prayer "subdued kingdoms, wraught righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." And in that *same power,* through which *they accomplished those things, we can live a life to the glory of God.*

But will it pay? Not from the viewpoint of the world. It will mean great sacrifice; also the scorn of the world, yes, even hatred and persecution. But from the viewpoint of the *Christian* it *pays infinitely.* It will mean the partaking of the glory of God already here, and at the end *eternal life and glory with God.*

May we then forget the trials and tribulations, and remember that the joys and the triumphs shall alone remain at the end, if we faint not, and they shall remain forever and ever.

Come, pilgrim, give us then thy hand
And let us journey on,
Dark is the night in Edom's land,
And we are far from home.
Continuing cities have we none
While we do sojourn here;
May we not linger, but *press on,*
Without a doubt or fear.

For though the night be dark and drear
E'en as the vale of death,
No evil do we need to fear,
If we but have the faith.
'Twill drive the shadows from our path,
And light us on our way;
"*Press on,*" be that our shibboleth!
Night turneth soon to day.

And though the "Jordan's sullen stream"
Twixt us and "Canaan" lies,
We still "*press on,*" beyond there gleam
The Mansions in the skies;
Where pilgrims such as we at last,
Encumbered oft by fears,
Shall *leave* the *trials* of the *past,*
And wipe away our tears.

Through Sacrifice Man Attains His Ideal.*

As we look back upon the history of mankind, we find, that at all ages the great thinkers have been at work trying to solve the mysteries of the Universe. They have observed the workings of the forces of nature; their minds have sped on imagination's hurried wing through the realms of infinitude, hoping somewhere along that endless course to discover at least a clue to the "raison d'être," the source of and reason for existence. Just as they felt, through their senses, a craving for material sustenance, thus, also, did they experience an inner, higher want, that must be satisfied, a question that must be answered: What are we, why and how do we exist? This great question became the incentive to all their efforts, and for the solution of the same they began what was destined to be an endless search. This search was at first *objective,* they noticed their immediate surroundings, observing closely the natural phenomena which from time to time were unveiled beneath

* Oration delivered at Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas, on the occasion of the Senior Class Day exercises, November 18, 1901.

We give it space for the sake of "Auld Lang Syne."

their penetrating scrutiny. As time went on, their efforts were partially rewarded by the discovery of such qualities as the *good,* the *beautiful,* and the *true,* and from out of these they developed an *ideal.* Looking at this ideal, and realizing its beauty and the harmony which seemed to exist between it and themselves, their hearts began to throb over their progress. All true culture is in its very foundation love for the beautiful, for culture strives towards harmony, and harmony is beauty. Yet, the beautiful, in order to have the highest value for us, must reflect something of ourselves, the essence of our being. Thus, in the ideal, which the philosophers had discovered, they saw this reflection (of themselves), or rather their very origin.

But the goal was not yet reached, the greatest part of their work still remained; that of *attaining the ideal.* How then was this to be accomplished?

If we consider the agencies by which humanity has step by step been lifted nearer the ideal, and through which it shall finally be identified with the ideal itself, we find as the most potent the *spirit of sacrifice.*

During two hundred years the pre-socratic philosophers had sought in various ways to account for the phenomena in nature; to adjust the position of man in the universe, and to define his relation to the source of all things, the *first principle,* the *cause uncaused.* In this attempt they had limited their search to the impersonal natural life.

Some imagined themselves to have found that which they sought in the *water,* others in the *air* or the *ether.* A few had mentioned *atoms* and *numbers,* and again *a certain fixed order of things* existing through *necessity;* while still others had given to the first cause a dualistic nature composed of the forces of *two opposites,* the *good* and the *evil, harmony* and *disharmony.* But it was still evident that they had not succeeded. Though to some extent they had formed the acquaintance with some of the attributes of the ideal: *goodness, justice,* and *truth,* yet, they regarded these as relative, existing only as in contrast to their op-

posites. The conclusion to which such a theory inevitably led, was, that nothing could be known with certainty, and therefore the attempt of realizing the ideal must, it seemed, end in ignominious failure. But on the arena of this confused thought a character appeared, whose personality seemed the very exponent of dualism, his rugged and homely exterior by no means reflecting the beauty, serenity, and harmony that dwelt within.

With the watchword "know thyself" on his lips, he went about proclaiming the doctrine that there is something in the universe that can be known absolutely, and that is *man.* Beneath the confused mass of opinions he found the true and immutable opinion, the *conscience* of the human race. Goodness, justice, and truth which hitherto had been relative qualities, now partook of a *personal nature.* Beauty became more beautiful, as to him it clearly emanated from *within,* from the human soul. The ideal which humanity was seeking he believed to be *man's own image,* and this belief fostered the thought that man has an eternal origin and that in his material form there dwells a spirit of unperishable beauty. Enraptured with this thought, he forgot himself, he forgot the world. To that spirit he would gladly give his every effort. But alas! He was misjudged. Through him beauty had become an inner quality, the *thinking* and *willing soul's own harmony;* and so he had greatly advanced the cause for which men were striving. But the blinded people saw it not, to them he was a fanatic, a corrupter of youth, and he was charged to recant his doctrine or die.

What! Should the ground that had been gained be lost? Should the ideal, which through him had been brought so near, again vanish in obscurity? No! The spirit of sacrifice prevailed. Socrates drank the hemlock, but the noble truths he had taught remained untarnished as an heirloom to posterity. True to his purpose, he spent the last moments of his life discoursing on the immortality of the soul, thus even in death lifting humanity one round nearer the goal.

As the voice of the sage was hushed, his spirit was breathed into the heart of a pupil whose part it was to take up the work of his master. It was the youthful ambition of Plato to win honor and fame, to make his name lustrous and himself an object of praise to the Athenian people. He wished by the efforts of his ardent spirit to infuse new life into his native city. The proper sphere in which to accomplish this he thought was politics, and his mind became busy with projects of reform. But e're long he began to feel intuitively that his hopes had been delusive, the brilliant fascinations of a statesman's life began to fade, and he saw more and more clearly that he was not the man destined by Providence to deliver his city from decay and death. The time for his first sacrifice had come. He must give up the ambitions of his youth and create for himself a new world. With spirit undaunted he plunged into the art of poetry. His fancies again portrayed the future in glowing colors. He imagined himself to have been touched by a flame of that fire which Prometheus stole directly from heaven; and in the stillness of the night he heard, as it were, the muses calling him to pour out the fullness of his soul in the art of song. Responsive to such rapture, his mind became productive with measures fresh and fair. He sang as he thought Homer himself to have sung in the early dawn of poetry. But even now his hopes were to be thwarted, his ambition had again misled him; his inspiration was false, for neither in poetry had he found his proper sphere. The verdict of the public had come to him judging his poetry unnatural, and with unspeakable pain he was forced to admit its truth.

The light flickered dimly from the hearth, filling the room with fantastic shadows, as one by one the weird hours of the night passed by. Unconscious of the flight of time he sat buried in deep thought. Within his soul a bitter struggle was going on, a battle was being fought. Must he again give up the hopes and ambitions of his young manhood? He had thought of future greatness, honor, and glory; was it but mockery? In his fancy the muses had

put the lyre in his hand and bade him sing; the laurel wreath crowned his brow as the adoring public hailed him the creator of a new and brilliant world. Was it all a transient dream? Must the ideal to which his beauty-loving soul was wedded forever evade him? His powers were spent, but he was nearing a resolution. Not in politics, not in poetry, could he attain his ideal; he must take up the search in a different sphere. He seized a roll of papyrus, which contained the product of his mind, the verses he had written, and with uncertain steps approached the hearth. His form trembled from the intensity of that final struggle, his eyes closed as he dropped the roll into the flames. A moment later, all that was left of his work was a heap of mouldering ashes. He turned and was startled by the splendor that had filled the room, and he realized that the sun in all its glory had arisen. It seemed a good omen and he caught the inspiration. Phoibos Apollo! he cried. Thou hast shattered the hopes of my youth, and I thank thee for it. Wouldst thou now usher me into a new, a truer world! His prayer was realized. From that time Plato became a philosopher unsurpassed. And yet, without his great *sacrifice* the Platonic philosophy, with all its gems of truth and beauty, would not have been our possession.

Though the bright ideas of Plato made great advancement in the realm of thought, yet even these did not successfully unite man and the ideal. On the perspective of the Oriental philosophy there appeared the dim outline of two forms, growing more and more distinct until they were clearly recognized, the one, as the image of *man,* the other, *death.* In the Egyptian religion the latter form became so powerful that for centuries mankind could do no more than stare in bewilderment at the monster. Everywhere in nature they could trace his footsteps. Yes, even *man himself* was *perishable.* How was this to be understood? Where was the *imperishable?* Where was the power that could remove the barrier which rose between the ideal and man? Could Egypt produce it? No. Then possibly Hel-

las? In vain. Humanity seemed doomed, and it was ready to despair, but the rescue was near. The dark shadows scattered as a new day began to dawn over the Orient, the light of which would bless the nations of the earth. Mid music of the spheres, the voices of angels, proclaiming *"peace on earth, good will toward men,"* a child was born at Bethlehem, in whose nature dwelt the *required power,* the *power* that could *give to man a form incorruptible.* That child was the *Saviour of the world, Jesus of Nazareth.* Yet this character, divine though He was, fulfilled His mission only through *sacrifice.* Opening his heart, the Crowned Sufferer sought to reinstall man in his lost estate. For years He gave Himself to the publican, the sinner, the prodigal, the poor in mind and heart.

We gather beneath the shadows of the cross to witness His great triumph. All the iniquities of the ages were pitted against Him in that final struggle. Would the powers of darkness and death be victorious? The earth trembled, darkness deepened, among the spectators gazing in awe there was breathless silence. The head of the Master droops, His lips move in utterance of the final message—*"It is finished".*—The great question for which the philosophers had spent their energy was solved. The wanting link in the golden chain which connects the children of earth with the throne of heaven, that unites finite man with the Infinite, the Ideal, was forged. How? By the *sacrifice of the one and only perfect life lived on earth.* And would we know the import of that victory? Ah! It is too farreaching for our comprehension. The laurel wreath that adorns the brow of the returning conqueror shall wither; the lustrous deeds of the great pass away into oblivion; the marble monuments of kings shall crumble into dust; *but that sacrifice of the humble Nazarene for the good of humanity shall live imperishable when time is no more.*

If we go out into nature and in communion with her seek to know the way by which our ideals are attained, we find the same method. A beautiful flower blossoms by the wayside unmindful of itself, and by its blushing petals, by

the fragrance it spreads abroad, it speaks to the wayworn traveler in a voice irresistible: "Here I am wholly at your service; take me! My beauty, my fragrance, my purity—all that I am I dedicate to you." The traveler stops, no longer weary, his soul no more weighed down by oppressing cares; but inspired by the noble ambition of making that flower, in all its purity, the emblem of his life. He plucks it. The flower has sacrificed itself, but in so doing it has given to a human soul a moment of the highest enjoyment; and greater still, it has *reflected something of himself*, it has *revealed to him* the *possibilities of his own nature.*

The significance of the victory gained for man on the cross of Calvary is something that cannot be fathomed in a day, nor in an age. Generations follow generations in the lapse of time, each one more enlightened than the other, and as the scope of the human intellect thus broadens, there will be a constant realization and appropriation of that victory until it shall all be our possession. But there must be *struggle, endurance, sacrifice,* beforehand. Dim and feeble are as yet our apprehensions of the things infinite, but the day shall come when we shall see it all clearly. Hereafter, in the manhood of our renewed faculties we shall be able so to climb, penetrate and explore, as to vastly outstrip our present feeble efforts. And in those our lofty researches we shall be aided by that Spirit, that Ideal, who now takes of the things eternal and shows them to the soul.—And at last, when the dark haze that has hovered over the vast expanse of centuries past shall be lifted; when the mist, with which the future has been enshrouded, shall be penetrated; when time and eternity, for us no longer separate, shall have melted into one: then, the *fruits of sacrifice shall reward the weary pilgrim who has reached the goal.*

"The Convenient Season."

Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, had been brought a captive from Jerusalem to Cesarea. There the high priest, Ananias, and a certain orator, Tertullus, had

caused him to be brought before the Roman Governor Felix, where Tertullus had proceeded to accuse Paul in an attempt to bring upon him the death sentence. Paul answered the accusations in an address of vindication, touching also upon the doctrines of the Christian religion, which he boldly professed before the Governor, declaring, moreover, that he was bound by his conscience to adhere to them. Felix at first listened with great interest to what Paul had to say; for, having a Jewish wife, and having come in contact with the Jewish people, he had some knowledge of their religious tenets, even the Christian doctrines, and he had, seemingly, a desire to learn more concerning the Christian faith.

But when Paul in the course of his address began to touch upon such subjects as righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come, it proved too strong meat for Felix. He trembled, and he said to Paul: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a *'convenient season,'* I will call thee." And so the golden opportunity, which might never again present itself, was lost to Felix, he finding it *more convenient* to remain a man of the world, and to continue to live after its manner, in transgressions and sins.

It is sad, indeed, to read this story of the Roman Governor's lost opportunity; his *return to the world,* after being *so near the Kingdom of God.*

But what is infinitely more sad is the fact that in this Christian era, and right here in this country, where the blessings of Christianity so richly abound, thousands are following the lamentable example of Felix. The Gospel of Christ has here been preached these many years; churches are found everywhere, whose doors are open wide to any and all who may have a desire to learn to know the way by which they might inherit eternal life; Sunday schools are maintained, where young and old are instructed in the Holy Scriptures, "which are able to make them wise unto salvation." Pastors, missionaries, and other Christian workers are untiringly going out on the highways and byways calling and inviting, saying: "Come, for all things

are now ready."—And yet, thousands will remain unconcerned, considering it *inconvenient,* just now, to give serious thought to the welfare of their immortal soul.

Here is a family who has had no church connection for years, notwithstanding they may live within walking distance of a church of the same denomination in which they were brought up and confirmed. Their children are not regularly attending any Sunday school. The pastor visits them from time to time, speaking to them of the importance of these matters; trying to impress upon them their responsibility, and the awful consequences of rejecting God's grace and neglecting their opportunities of salvation. He invites them to come to church, to send their children to the Sunday school, to become members of the church, that they might have the full benefit of its many blessings. But they answer evasively: "Well, not just now. We will think the matter over. Possibly some other time." And each time the pastor returns on a like errand he receives the *same answer.* The *"convenient season"* to enter the Kingdom of God, to accept Christ and appropriate His means of grace, never seems to arrive for such people. It is always *more convenient* to them to continue their life of sin, rejecting the grace of God.

O, what a terrible and fatal mistake! These people should know that the *convenient season* to accept Christ and consider their eternal welfare is *just now. "This* is the *accepted time; this* is the *day of salvation."*

That *more convenient season* will never come. For the longer they remain away from the Kingdom of God, the more established will they become in the ways of the world; the more enslaved in its bonds of sin. And soon—O, so soon—the day of grace is past, and eternity is yawning before them.

Friend, are you one of those who are letting the golden opportunities to attend to *the one thing necessary* go by, being engrossed in the things of this world? Awake, before it is too late! Know that the *convenient season* to accept Christ unto salvation is *now, just now.*

The Vail Lifted.

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

(Text: 2 Cor. III., 4-18.)

Life has always been to many people, not to say all mankind, a great mystery. The ancient philosophers did their best to lift the vail which seemed to hang between man and the source, the reason for and purpose of his existence. They not only scrutinized and studied the things of the present, but tried to peer deep into the mysterious past and the likewise mysterious and unknown future, to find the "raison d'être" of man, i. e. the purpose of his existence, the meaning of life itself. But though they by such efforts brought forth many valuable ideas and added much to the sum total of human knowledge, yet, they failed in their purpose to explain life itself. And so it became all the more evident, as the psalmist has said, that man is "wonderfully and fearfully made."

And, friends, that these men, the ancient philosophers, failed in their efforts to disclose the mysteries of life, is not so much to be wondered at, for they tried to do so without taking into account the Word of God, the revealed will of our maker. Even in *our time,* with the aid not only of all the sciences and systems of education, but also the teachings of the Holy Scriptures themselves, even the New Testament, it is still to a very great extent beyond the ability of the wisest to explain and account for the many deeply hidden mysteries of this life. For, as Paul says, "we see now through a glass darkly." We are reminded forcibly of the fact that we are finite, while God, our Maker, is infinite. We have our limitations, indeed; very narrow limitations sometimes, while to God, His wisdom, knowledge, and power, there is no limit. And He often "moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." And so it is that there has always hung, and there still hangs, a *vail* between us and the mysteries of our own life.

When we scan the horizon of human events today, are there not many things, many movements, many conditions, many phenomena, that are wonderful, defying our

ability to comprehend and explain? The great world drama that is being enacted over there in Europe; the various movements among the masses; the uprisings and upheavals, the dissensions and strifes among different groups and classes of men—"the groaning of the whole creation"—what does it all mean? What will be the final outcome of it all? Those are questions before which we all stand unable to make any satisfactory reply.

But we have possibly wandered a little from our text. Let us get back to it. The apostle speaks here of a "vail" which had remained unlifted up to his time, and which, indeed, to many people is unlifted yet to this day. But he also indicates how that vail might be lifted and the mysteries which lie behind it be solved. It was some 1500 years before the New Testament era. The covenant people, Israel, had, under the direction of God and the leadership of Moses, broken the shackles of their Egyptian bondage and set out, as a free people, on their journey to the promised land. They had crossed the Red Sea, whose waters had parted by the miracle of Moses, and had arrived safely on the other shore, while Pharao and his hosts had perished. And now they were peacefully encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Here God appeared before them in the midst of thunder and lightning and other manifestations of power and majesty; for He had come to impart to His people the Law, the ten Commandments. Moses went with God up into the mountain to receive from God's own hands the written decalogue, together with instructions how to teach the people its divine truths. When he returned, after having been in the presence of the living God, his face shone with the reflection of God's glory. It shone so that the people could not endure to look upon him, and so he was constrained to hang a vail before his face. Now then, Paul proceeds here to make a practical application of that historic fact. He says such is and has been the attitude of the Jewish people toward the divine word, the prophesies of the Old Testament, which pointed forward to a Messiah, a coming Saviour of the world. As they could

not see the face of Moses because of the vail, so there is to them a vail obscuring the glorious truths of the Old Testament Scriptures, so that they cannot see their meaning. But whose fault is that? Not Moses', for he endeavored to make the revealed word and will of God clear to them. Not God's, for He did not wish His people to walk in darkness, but to be enlightened by the light from on high. It was their own fault. They *would not* open their eyes to see the truth. They refused to lift the vail and see the divine gracious will of God, declaring to them that a way of salvation had been prepared, and that He desired no sinner's death, but that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. They would not with eyes of faith behold God's merciful plan of salvation, and therefore, says Paul, there hangs yet to this day a vail before their eyes, and they cannot see. Now that is indeed sad, that the old Covenant people are so blinded and so prejudiced that they cannot, or will not, see and accept the salvation that has been prepared. "He came to His own, and His own received Him not."

But, friends, the Jews are not alone in that respect. How many millions are there not right here in this so-called Christian country, who are just as blind to the eternal glorious truths of God's salvation through Christ; just as blind as if a heavy vail were suspended before their eyes. They are in the dark and cannot see. They cannot see Christ, their blessed Saviour, at so great a sacrifice to Himself working out their salvation. They cannot see that all has been done; that in the blood of Jesus Christ the price for their redemption has been paid, and that the way is now open to whomsoever will. They cannot see it. Why? They *will not* see it. They persist in their blindness. They hold a vail before their eyes that they may not see. And it is because they want to remain in the world to enjoy the things of the world among the ungodly. What, then, is to be done? How shall that vail of unbelief and hardheartedness be lifted from them?

We said a moment ago that the apostle indicates here

how the vail might be lifted from the eyes not only of the Jews, but from all who walk in unbelief. Listen to what he says: "Nevertheless, when they shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away." When they *turn to the Lord* in search of help and mercy unto salvation. But they will not do that until they are brought face to face with their *needs*. When they have learnt to see their own helplessness; that they are lost in transgressions and sins; that they will be condemned, if they repent not. When they behold themselves as lost and condemned sinners, then the vail will be lifted; the vail of unbelief and self-sufficiency. That vail will be lifted, and they will see God's merciful plan of salvation through Christ. Like the disciples who on the Mt. of Transfiguration "saw no man save Jesus only," they will see and understand that there is no other foundation for their eternal welfare "than that which is laid, Christ Jesus"; "no other name under heaven, given among men, in which they can be saved."

God grant that this may be accomplished for many; that the vail of unbelief and perversion in sin may be lifted from them before the last hour of this day of grace here on earth has struck, and the gates of hell shall have closed upon them!

O, what chances some people are taking! They know not what hour their life may be cut off by the hand of the Almighty, and yet they dare to scoff at His means of grace; they dare to hang before their eyes the vail of unbelief, *defying the living God.* God have mercy upon them before it is too late; while *the "vail" may yet be lifted!*

The Perfect Example.

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

(Text, Heb. 5: 1-10.)

That is the topic we propose for your consideration tonight. It is based upon the contents of our text, where the Apostle speaks of one who was perfect, and whose life and work was such that it gives an example so eminent, so

full and complete, that it can best be characterized by calling it the *perfect example.* So let us concentrate our thoughts upon that subject for a little while.

Now the *power of example* is something that is recognized among all classes of people and in all walks of life, for the reason that man is dependent upon his environments. Have you ever stopped to think of that, how much a person is the product of environment i. e. his surroundings: the persons, characters, forces, influences, that make up the community? It is so. People, as a rule, are products of environment. Then, too, they help form the general environment. Occasionally there is some man who has strength of character enough, and is original and independent enough to rise above the power of environment, so that while he himself is not very much influenced, he influences others and shapes the general tone of the community. Such a character was, for instance, Luther, Charles XII., Gustavus Adolphus, Abraham Lincoln.

But to get back to the general rule, people *are* products of environment.

Now environment is largely *example;* and so it follows that the *power of example is great.* Take, for instance, an army: Through example the general and other higher officers can exert a great influence upon the rank and file. A business concern is largely, as to its integrity, what the head of the concern is. In any other organization, or institution, the home, the church, the same rule applies.

Now referring to our subject: "The Perfect Example," who can that be? In this world of sin, of shortcomings, failures, evil influences of many and varied kinds, where can we find a *perfect example?* Is there any mortal who would dare to claim such distinction; whose every gift, quality, and characteristic would be so near the *ideal* that he could be considered a *perfect example* for others to emulate? Indeed, a search for such an individual would be a *vain search.* He is not to be found on this terrestrial globe. Even those we mentioned: a Luther, an Abraham Lincoln, great men, who gave the world some of its greatest

blessings, can not be called perfect, for the simple reason that *no mortal can attain to perfection* here on this side of eternity.

"Well," you say, "what, then, is the use of speaking of a perfect example, if such is not to be found among men?" Oh, you forget one, whom we have not yet mentioned in this connection, but whom we are now going to mention; who stands alone, in a class by Himself, so far above the rest of us mortals that there can be no comparison; and yet who was so *near us* that He was *like unto us* in all things, even tempted like we in all things, yet *without sin*. You know now of whom we speak as the *"Perfect Example."* Yes, the lowly Nazarene. Oh, indeed, He was not highly esteemed among the great multitude of men. He was rejected by them and despised. There was nothing in Him that delighted the rabble, nor yet the self-exalted Scribes and Pharisees. They even did "shoot out their lips in derision." And so He became the "Corner Stone which was rejected of the builders." He became the "Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief." And yet this same lowly and despised man of sorrows is the one who *stands out preeminently* above the rest of the human race, like a great shining light, the *Morning Star*, which spreads its radiant beams, scattering the darkness of the night and telling to all the world that the *dawn of day* has come. He, then, Jesus of Nazareth, is the *"Perfect Example."*

Now, before we proceed we want to say this—lest we be misunderstood—that we do not consider Jesus Christ *only* as an *example*, even though it be a perfect one; for that would not be doing Him full justice. To say merely that He was an example, even the perfect example, *does not go far enough*. He is *infinitely more* than that. And here is where our doctrine in the Lutheran church differs from that of many others. Many consider Christ *only* in the light of an example; as a man of more than ordinary gifts and abilities; a man who succeeded better than any other in living up to his ideals. That is as far as their opinion of Christ goes. And we see at once that such a

doctrine does not answer the purpose at all; the *great purpose* for which God gave His Son, and for which Jesus came to this earth. How about the salvation of sinful man; the redemption of the fallen race? Could that have been accomplished, if Christ had been *only an example?* We must answer no, *positively no.* Mankind would then have been lost. For in order to bring about our salvation, our redemption from sin and the powers of evil, it was necessary for Christ to be the *Saviour,* the *Redeemer,* who *gave His life* a ransom for us; who also rose from the grave a Victor over sin and death. So there we gainsay the "moralists"—and the Word of God itself contradicts them; those who would teach and have men believe that all that is necessary is to make up your mind to "be good" and to bring about certain outward reforms. *"Reform"* is not the same as *"regeneration,"*

So Christ became the *Saviour,* the *Redeemer,* through whom it became possible for us to be *born* again through faith in Him and through the power and influence of His spirit, who worketh faith in us.

But we can, nevertheless, speak of Jesus as an example, if we only do not make the mistake of the moralists and say that that is all He was.

Now, then, as an example, what do we see in Him? What may we learn from Him? He was *meek* and *lowly* in spirit. That is one characteristic which we should strive to attain; one example we should pray that we might emulate, especially since the tendency of the human heart is to be proud and arrogant. There is much to learn, indeed, from the example of Christ in humility.

Then again, when we consider His life here on earth, how beautiful in its *self-sacrificing service!* When He "went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed." Over the hills and plains of Judea, along the shores of the Galilee, and through the provinces of Samaria; everywhere, we can trace His footsteps, everywhere we find His deeds of love, kindness, and mercy growing and bearing fruit. And through it all He thought not of Him-

self, to spare Himself; no, not one iota of labor and sacrifice, of pain and sorrow. Indeed, it can truthfully be said as Isaiah had said of Him: "The burden of our sins and afflictions was laid upon Him." Now are we doing anything in that line? Are we honestly endeavoring to follow the *perfect example* Christ has set for us in kind, loving, self-sacrificing labor and service to our fellow-men and to our God?

Then one point, especially emphasized in our text, in which Jesus set a perfect example, is *obedience.* We read here: "He learned obedience by what He suffered." How perfect was not that obedience! Through all His suffering, all persecutions, He thought of only *one thing:* obedience to the will of His heavenly Father, accomplishing the work He had called Him to do, even to the bitter death on the cross. Are we trying to learn from Jesus in this respect; to follow this perfect example in obedience? Even when suffering and afflictions come, do we bow in submission to our Father's will? Often at such times we grow restless, morose, and vindictive, and complain, without showing any patience at all, or obedience to God. That is why the apostle here in our text reminds us of this, the perfect example the Lord set before us in *patience and obedience.*

Now it is hard for us to follow and emulate Christ. As has already been said, *we* cannot attain *perfection.* But we should, nevertheless, strive to walk in our Master's footsteps. And if only we are honest, upright, and earnest in those endeavors, God will give us grace and aid us by His Spirit, so that we may grow more Christlike day by day, until our life's work is finished and we shall be gathered home to the mansions of the blessed, where no imperfections shall mar our life. For we shall there see Him face to face and be like unto Him, who was our *Perfect Example,* our *Saviour* and *Redeemer.*

God grant His grace that this may be fulfilled upon us!

The Surety of the Testament.

Fifth Sunday after Easter.

(Text, Heb. 7: 19-28.)

This subject, upon which we ask you to center your thoughts this evening, may at first strike you as a little odd, and you may wonder how we can produce a Gospel sermon from a text, or topic, so peculiar. That word *"surety,"* you may think, is almost suggestive of *business* and legal transactions, for sureties are generally given in connection with purchases and business contracts. So it is. But even so, are we not up to date and right in line with the interests of the day? For is not that the tendency of the time; business and more business? We are more engrossed with such activities than ever before. *"Business as usual"* is the slogan of the merchants and other men of affairs all over the country. Nor will they be satisfied with that alone, business as usual, but would rather *increase* it and make it *more business than usual,* and business in an intensified form. So we are right in line when we propose a subject that suggests business.

But lest the trend of your thoughts get an impetus in a wrong direction from the very beginning, we will pause here to make an explanation of our viewpoint. In proposing this topic, which seems almost as a business proposition, we are not speaking, nor do we in this connection wish to speak of business of the *material* kind, by which men's coffers are filled to overflowing with silver and gold; by which the figures of the bank holdings and other property values mount up into the millions. No, we are not allied with the Morgan, and Schwab, and Rockefeller, and kindred interests. We are not championing the cause and the methods of *material* business, but a business that is *not material* i. e. which is not of the earth earthly. "But," you say, "hold a minute. Can there be *such* a business?" Yes, there *can be* and there *is* a business that is *heavenly, divine,* whose author and promoter is *God.*

Do you ask me to prove that assertion? Then I will do so from the words of the divine Book, even from the

mouth of Jesus Himself. When, at the age of twelve, Jesus had accompanied His parents to Jerusalem and had tarried in the temple at the close of the Festival, Joseph and Mary, observing that He was not in the company on the homeward journey, returned to the city, seeking Jesus. Upon finding Him in the temple discoursing with the learned doctors and astounding them with His knowledge and wisdom, the parents upbraided Him, saying: "Why hast thou done us this? We have sought thee sorrowing." Jesus answered them: "Wist ye not that I must be about *my Father's 'business'?*" Do not those words of the Lord Jesus tell us plainly that God has *business* here on earth which must be transacted, and that it is of vital importance that that business should be attended to, promoted and developed, with all possible zeal and energy? Most assuredly. Jesus Himself labored unceasingly to further it. So did the apostles and their co-workers; and so must *we* who confess Christ and who through our church membership have enlisted for His cause. What is that business of our heavenly Father here on earth? It can be expressed in one word: *Salvation.* The salvation of souls, the redemption of mankind, the seeking and saving of that which is lost.

Now that is the business of God here on earth. Are you interested in that kind of affairs? Have you enlisted in His army to promote it? Will you enlist *now,* if you have not already? If so, then let us continue for a while to consider and discuss it. And in so doing we will get back to our subject: *"The Surety of the Testament."*

Now we know that much business of the common, material kind is transacted through contracts and agreements, wills, and testaments, etc. So it is with this business of saving souls. God has a "contract," a *covenant* with us for the promotion of that business. He has given us a will, or *testament,* setting forth that we might become heirs to eternal life. That will was made so *broad* that it covers the entire human race. Any and all, *who are willing,* may be made a party to that will and receive that which the

will promises: eternal salvation and happiness. God tells us in His holy Word that He desires *no sinner's death,* but *wills* that *"all men should be saved* and come to the knowledge of truth." And from the very beginning of the world, even from the days of Adam, He made known to man this good and gracious will. He did so directly and through His prophets and other human agencies. Even on the very day that Adam and Eve had sinned in the garden of Eden and brought condemnation and death upon themselves and all mankind, so that God must needs remove them from that beautiful Paradise; even then, at the same time, He gave them the promise of *restoration,* of salvation, if they would accept it.

Then, again, during the time of Moses and the early Israelites He renewed this covenant, saying: "I will walk with you and dwell among you, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Yea, before that time He had said to each of the Patriarchs, pointing forward to the coming Messiah: "In thy seed shall all the peoples of the earth be blessed."

And thus again and again He renewed His promise, and repeated and established among the people His covenant of salvation. And, O, how glorious was not the message of that covenant to a people who would otherwise have continued to walk in darkness and the shadow of death! To many, yea thousands, it brought joy unspeakable, and a peace that passed all understanding. And so they looked forward even from the time of Moses and on through the period of the Judges and the Prophets—throughout all those centuries—they continued to look forward in earnest longing for and expectation of the day when they should behold the visible token, the *personal guarantee* of the fact that God would fulfill His covenant, that His business of salvation here on earth would be brought to an infinitely successful and glorious consummation.

Of course there were in those days, as now and ever, those who would not believe; who therefore would take no interest in this covenant that God had made with man

from the days of Adam, this divine business of salvation; but who continued to chase their various phantoms of worldly affairs and pleasures, giving themselves with all the zeal of their carnal natures to the gratification of their material senses alone, even taking up idol worship and other ungodly practices of the heathen. At times this disloyalty to and apostacy from the faith in the promise and covenant of God was so great and so general among the people of Israel that the prophets were constrained to flee out into the wilderness and there pour out their hearts to God in grievous lamentations, saying: "O Lord, thou God of our fathers, of Abraham, Isaak, and Jacob, thy people have forsaken thee. We are left alone. There is none beside us remaining who has not fallen into the ways of the ungodly." But at such times God would comfort and sustain His prophets, telling them that His covenant still remained intact; and that notwithstanding the spiritual darkness that had enveloped the people and the fact that ungodliness had waxed sorely great and mighty, there were yet left seven thousand men who had not bowed their knees to Baal; and that in the fulness of time His business of salvation would again blossom upon the earth; yea, that living springs should break forth upon the heath, and the wilderness would blossom as the lily. So the prophets with their little band of faithful followers would continue to live in faith and blessed assurance and to await the day when the guarantee of their salvation should be made manifest in the flesh; when the *"Surety of the Testament"* should appear among men to make good the eternal promises of God.

The "Surety of the Testament"—ah, now we have gotten back to our immediate subject. You say: "What, or who, was then that *Surety,* by whom fallen men would know absolutely, that salvation was in store for them?" The Surety is *He whom God from the beginning had appointed.* And who is that? The answer is given in many beautiful passages of Holy Writ, both in the Old and New Testament: "The *seed of the woman* shall bruise the ser-

pent's head." "God hath chosen us in *Christ* before the foundations of the world were laid." "God so loved the world, that He gave *His only begotten Son,* that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Ah, yes, it was *He,* the *Son of God, Jesus, the Saviour of the world.*

As the Old Dispensation among Israel was drawing to a close, the faithful, by the signs and tokens that God gave them to comprehend, *knew,* that the time was at hand for the "Surety" of the salvation covenant to appear. Therefore the prophet Isaiah made bold to proclaim that assurance thus: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." And again: "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." The day came and these beautiful promises were fulfilled, as was announced on that first day of the *new dispensation,* when the heavenly hosts sang their hosannas and proclaimed to the shepherds of Judea: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Now let us seek to make still more clear the meaning of these words: "the surety of the testament." In the first place, what was the testament? We have already said that it was the gracious will and plan of God that men should be saved; which plan He had formed even before the beginning of the world, and had made known from the days of Adam. That plan was a *will,* a *covenant,* a *testament;* for God made the promise to man, giving His word, spoken and written, to establish it. Yet something further was necessary in order that the testament should be fulfilled. For the "party of the second part," i. e. *man,* could not carry out his part. He did not have the power or ability because of sin, and the weakness of his nature, made weak and impotent through sin. Thus, notwithstanding the promise of salvation given by God, man would still have been lost, if left to his own powers and resources.

Someone was therefore needed to fulfill *man's part* of the testament: fulfilling of the law, and the paying of the penalty of sin. Someone was needed to do that who was not himself hampered by sin and weakness and natural depravity. There was none who could fill such a place save Christ, God's own beloved Son. Therefore God in His infinite mercy sent Him, and Christ in His boundless love did come to this earth to take up *our burdens,* to suffer the chastisement of *our sins,* to fulfill and perfect that in which *we had failed.* This He did during His three years of labor here, and particularly by His death and His subsequent resurrection—and thus did He become *"the Surety of the Testament,"* the *guarantee of our salvation.* There in Him: His death and resurrection; in short, in *"Christ and Him Crucified,"* you and I, and *all who will believe,* have an *absolute guarantee of salvation.* No power on earth, nor yet in hell, can rob us of that assurance.

And yet, strange as it may seem, we ourselves can make this testament of salvation, of which Christ is the Surety, *null* and *void* in *our own case.* How is that? In what manner? Through *unbelief.* O, is it not terrible, appalling, that we ourselves through hardness of heart and unbelief can *undo* what God in His infinite love and mercy has *willed to do for us?* For God does not force salvation upon any one. He has given each a free will to choose. But it is an *awful thought* that men should choose *eternal death* rather than *eternal life.*

Now then, dear friends, we have considered this peculiar subject: *"The Surety of the Testament."* We have seen what the *testament* is: *God's gracious will to save us from sin unto eternal life.* We have seen who is the *Surety. Christ, the crucified Saviour.* May, then, these facts be applied to us! May we accept the testament so freely given! May we in true faith *abide in Him* who is the *Surety!* Then we are safe. No harm can come to us. We can "smile at all our foes." We can say with the Apostle Paul: "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things

to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Moments of Transfiguration.

That is a subject we might discuss a little while tonight. It is in line with the thought and subject of the day, this being "the Day of Transfiguration." Now transfiguration means a *change,* both as to the outward form and appearance, and also as to the inner feelings and emotions. We spoke this morning of the transfigured Saviour, "The Son of Man Glorified," showing how Christ at different times during His life and work here on earth was transfigured. Being otherwise in a state of humiliation, there were moments in His life when He was transfigured and stood forth in all His divine glory: As at the occasion related in the Gospel for today, the event on the Mount of Transfiguration. That was a change as to the outward appearance; for as to the thoughts and feelings of Christ, they were at all times pure, holy, and divine.

Then there were other times in the life of Christ when He was glorified through His words and deeds; when performing His miracles, which were superhuman, showing a power and wisdom infinitely above that given to man. In all these things Christ was transfigured, for through the state of humiliation, to which He was subjected during His earthly life, His divine glory and attributes shone forth.

But, speaking this evening of "Moments of Transfiguration," we have in mind the life and experiences of man. Can there then be moments of transfiguration in the life of man? Yes, it was so with the disciples. There on the Mount of Transfiguration they experienced a change of inner emotions. Their heart and soul was filled with thoughts and feelings such as did not always come to them in the midst of their daily work; thoughts and feelings that lifted them up far above the troubles and worries, the hardships and tribulations of everyday life. Peter gave expression to those feelings when he said: "Lord, it is good for us to

be here: If Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."

Then there were other moments of transfiguration in their lives: for instance, when they stood at the empty tomb on Easter morn, beholding with wonder the vacant sepulchre, and realizing that something of surpassing importance had taken place; and when they heard from the lips of Mary, who had seen the Lord, that He was risen. Again when the Lord appeared before them at various instances after His resurrection, and their hearts were filled with unspeakable joy. Also on Pentecost, when through the power of the Spirit, which had been poured out upon them, they spoke with tongues to such effect that three thousand souls were converted. That was a transfiguration both as to outward appearance and inner power, for while they spoke *"with tongues,"* as they had never spoken before, there were *visible tongues of fire* resting upon them.

When we read in our Bible the story of other holy men, servants of God: Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, the Prophets, etc., we see that there were moments in the life of them all, when they experienced such wonderful things that it might well be called a transfiguration.

"But," you say, "those were all *holy* men, Judges, Prophets, Apostles, etc. Can we say that it ever comes within the lot of *ordinary* men to experience any thing like that?" There may be different opinions as to that; and from a superficial viewpoint, one would be tempted to answer negatively. This life is, indeed, so prosaic; nay, worse than that. It is full of incidents and experiences that certainly do not lift our hearts and souls upward; that are certainly not elevating and inspiring. For instance, over there in the trenches of Europe, where shot and shell are unceasingly bursting, where bombs are tearing up the earth, automatically digging the graves for the hapless thousands; where gases and liquid fires snuff out the lives of the "les miserables" who remain—surely, that is nothing very inspiring or elevating. Or the things that have recently happened in our neighboring city, East St.

Louis, Ill. (Race riots with massacres and other outrages). Or in Flat River, Mo. (Labor troubles with attendant lawlessness). Even in our ordinary, everyday life, there is so much of toil, of worry, of struggles. Well did the Lord's servant of old say: "When life is at its best, it is only labor and sorrow."

So it is. And yet we dare say that there are moments of transfiguration in the life of each and everyone. Instances when the toils and struggles, and all things discouraging, are compelled to give way to a transcendant joy; a joy that will not be kept back, that will not be subdued, but rises above all obstacles. And these moments may come in the midst of our most trying experiences. Take the life and experience of the early Christians as an example. They were scorned and ridiculed; they were jeered and scoffed at; persecuted, and at last brought into the Roman arena to be devoured by wild beasts or burned at the stake to furnish *"amusement"* for the ungodly. But in the midst of such persecutions, such tortures, their hearts were filled with joy, and they would raise their voices in praise and thanksgiving. Their souls were lifted up above all that was earthly. The words of the Prophet were fulfilled upon them: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles."

So we see that it *is possible,* even for people of "common clay," ordinary men and women, to experience moments of transfiguration. And could we hear tonight a testimony from each of those who now are members of the Church Triumphant, who now rejoice among the saints above—could we hear a word of testimony from their lips tonight, they would all tell us that however fraught with trials and tribulations their lives were, there were moments when flashes of heavenly light would illumine their path. However deep and dark was the vale of sorrow and woe, through which life's path would sometimes lead them, there were still moments when they were borne aloft to the summit of transfiguration, from which point they

caught a glimpse and a foretaste of the land of glory beyond.

And I am sure that each and every one of you, if you are true followers of Christ, have made like experiences. Did the future seem dark and dreary sometimes? Had the bright promises, that in early life shone around you and spurred you on to such heroic efforts, been left unfulfilled? Were the hopes and prospects all blasted? And did you feel, as a consequence, that life was scarcely worth the living any more? Just then, a "still, small voice" within you would speak with irresistible force—and everything was changed—*transfigured!* Your spirits rose. Your heart throbbed and swelled with an unutterable joy. You rose up by that power that was working within you, the power of the Spirit of God, and took a new grip on life. You mastered the situation. You overcame the obstacles. You rose up above every encumbering care and weight that would drag you down.—That, friend, was *"a moment of transfiguration,"* by the grace and power of God.

Ah, yes, such experiences *are possible* to us *all.* If we only entrust ourselves implicitly in the hands of Him, who so tenderly cares for us; without whose will not even a sparrow falls to the earth.

Leave it to *Him*, dear friend, and all your days will not be days of sorrow and sadness. There will be days of *joy*, with *"moments of transfiguration."*

"He loves, He cares, He knows;
Nothing that thought can dim.
He gives the very best to those,
Who leave the choice to Him."

By Man, Death; by Man, Life.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

(Text: Rom. V., 12-21.)

"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

I shall never forget how these words used to resound

through the vast auditorium at Bethany College, when sung by the great Messiah Chorus during the annual renditions at the Easter Festivals. As we know, this immortal composition, Handel's Messiah, sets forth God's plan of salvation and His method of making it known to man. The production takes up that plan from the very beginning; the old testament prophesies, even from the time of Adam, pointing forward to the coming Messiah. It goes on to show the fulfillment of those prophesies, when on the first Christmas morn the heavenly hosts sang their hosannas and announced to the shepherds of Judea: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord." The composition then continues to show how Christ through His suffering and death has "borne *our griefs* and carried *our sorrows,*" and thus became our Redeemer. Now the words quoted above from I. Cor. 15: 21, 22, constitute the subject matter in two numbers of Handel's masterpiece; and as I said in the beginning, I shall never forget the effect of those words as sung by a chorus of six hundred voices to an audience of four thousand. Among that vast throng there was breathless silence, and when the volume from those six hundred voices, singing those beautiful, soul-stirring words, floated out over the audience, the latter were enraptured and many were moved to tears.—"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

It is the same truth that is expressed in our text tonight. Though it is taken from Paul's letter to the Romans, we find a striking similarity to the words spoken in his epistle to the Corinthians. The thought expressed is exactly the same. This is what he says here: "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." And again: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Returning to our introductory words from the Corinthians, *"Since by man came death"*—let us stop before them a few moments in reflection. We often hear people complain of all the evil that exists in this world. And we cannot blame them so much for that, for this world is, indeed, full of evil. From the slums, with their *"underworld"* dens of sin and vice, to the very highest pinnacle of the *most polished society*, with all its boasted culture and refinement, its outward respectability and even honor and glory, there is one long chain of evil, fettering men in its tyrannical bonds. Thousands are groaning under the weight of that burden of sin and evil. So it is not strange that people complain and decry such a state. But what is deplorable in this connection is the fact that many *misplace the blame* for such evil conditions. They would namely put the blame on God. And so they say: "We cannot understand it. If there is a God, and He is good and righteous, as He is said to be, how can you account for all this evil in the world? For if God has made the world, is He not then responsible for that which is in it? Whence comes all this evil, and how can God allow it to exist?" These people think they are very profound in their arguments. They believe they have propounded a question that is unanswerable. They think, furthermore, that they have God Himself decidedly at a disadvantage in this attack upon Him. But they are only beating around the bush. They are insincere, and will not honestly face the question, looking for the cause of the evil of the world and placing the blame for it *where it belongs*. They are only seeking a way by which to quibble out of their own responsibility, and of easing their conscience by putting the blame on someone else, even God. Paul would set such people right, if they would only listen to him. In our text tonight, as well as the passage quoted from the Cor., he tells the *naked truth* as to whose fault it is that so much sin and evil exists in the world. He lays bare the *sore spot*, and there is no getting around his words. "Since by *man* came death." Now death is the consequence, the *"wages of sin."* Sin came first, and then, as an

inevitable consequence, death. So we can truthfully say: Since by *man* came *sin*, and then *death because of sin*—ah yes, there, and nowhere else, we have the cause and the source of all this evil—in *man's own perverted, sinful heart.*

Now this brings us back to the very beginning, the sad event that happened in the Garden of Eden; man's fall into sin. God had created man in *His own image.* And what did that mean? It meant that as first fashioned by the hand of the Almighty, and endowed by His Spirit, man was *good* and *pure.* He was without sin, no evil indwelling in his heart. But he fell into sin. He allowed evil propensities to be implanted into his heart by listening to temptations and by disobedience to God's word, eating of the forbidden fruit. God had warned him of the evil consequences of such an act, but at the same time He had given man a free will to choose between good and evil, sin and righteousness. For God did not want to make man a mere machine, without a will or freedom of choice. In such a case man would have been no more than the animals, (which have in a strict sense no will, but follow blindly the instincts of nature) while the fact is, as God did create man, he was "only a little lower than the angels" (Ps. 8:5). So man had a free will to choose. But God had shown him plainly *which way* to choose in order to *avoid sin* and its awful consequences. "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But alas! Adam and Eve heeded not this word of warning. They disobeyed God, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell into sin—and the God-given image was lost. And from that day to this, and ever more, *disobedience to God, waywardness*, and *self-will* have kept and keep man in sin and bring about these evil conditions that we so greatly deplore. May we then be honest, and confess our sins, and lay the blame for it where it belongs, upon *ourselves.* May we say with the prophet of old: "All we like sheep have gone astray." May we cry with the Publican: "God, be merciful unto me, a sinner!"

But "God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and

plenteous in mercy." Therefore, though man, through his own choice, by his own willing, has brought sin and evil into the world, and thereby its awful consequences, *death*, God does not leave the matter there. He has prepared a way by which we might be lifted out of the mire of sin; by which we might be delivered from the bondage of sin and death. Therefore Paul is able to speak these wonderful words and give us this blessed assurance: "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Christ came into this world—sent by His Father, who so *loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son*—as *our advocate*, unworthy though we were. He took our burdens upon Himself. In all that *we* had *failed He* was *perfect. Our* lamentable *weaknesses* were infinitely more than *outweighed* by *His* boundless *strength*, to whom was given all power in heaven and on earth. In all *our* dire *poverty* and helplessness we were *enriched by the grace of Him*, who *"though rich, was made poor for our sake."* And at last He paid the *full penalty of our sins* by His *death on the cross.* The way is therefore clear and open to us by which to rise up out of the mire of our sins and trespasses and stand on the solid rock of righteousness, Christ Jesus; by which to shake off the power of *death* and walk in the *newness of life.* We can triumphantly say with Paul: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Christ Himself said: "I live, and ye shall live also." And we remember Paul's words to the Galatians: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

May we then not go about only deploring the evil in the world and blaming God for it. But may we be honest, and in deep humiliation confess our own sins, yet at the same time rejoicing that a way has been made open to us by which to rise out of sin to a new life: which new life, even here on earth, shall grow and develop until at last it shall end in an *eternal life of glory* and *happiness with God.*

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Sowing in Tears; Reaping in Joy.

(Text: Psalm 126.)

This afternoon I was out on a little mission which we pastors have the pleasure sometimes to perform; namely as instruments of the Lord to receive through the administering of the Sacrament of Baptism a little urchin into the fellowship of Christ and His church. And as I returned an hour ago and began to consider what I should say to you tonight, and upon what text I should base my sermon, the choice fell upon this psalm.

There were three reasons why that psalm appealed to me as a suitable text for this evening: 1) It is very beautiful and inspiring. 2) It was read this morning as responsive reading in our Sunday school, and its beautiful, reassuring words were thus brought to my attention then, and have been lingering in my mind and heart all afternoon. The third reason is that I am now about to leave my work here in St. Louis for a little while. So whatever I say tonight will be my last word to you from this pulpit for a period of two or three months. I am not going to preach you a farewell sermon, exactly, for I hope, if it is God's will, that I shall be back in the Fall to resume my duties here. So it is not exactly a farewell sermon; and yet no one knows. I shall travel some two or three thousand miles in my absence, and one never knows what may happen on a journey like that. Also, two or three months may bring great and unlooked for changes. The things we hope to do some sixty or ninety days hence may be left undone by us for the reason that the Lord in His wisdom may see fit to cut short our service. The place where we have sojourned for a decade or so, may never again be the field of our labors, for the reason that the Lord of Harvests may find it in harmony with His wise plans to transfer us to

other fields, or to call us home to the Church Triumphant. We have no guarantee of the morrow. And when we realize that our life here is but as "a swift fleeting meteor; a fast flying cloud; a flash of the lightning"—which flashes an instant and then is gone—we see how foolish it is for us to attempt to say with any degree of certainty: "Next month, or two months hence, I will do this or that."

Therefore, I am justified in making this little sermon tonight at least a *temporary farewell,* and, in so doing, I will give you the 126th psalm as a "thought," a "Gedenkspruch."

"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them.

The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Let us first get the historical setting of these words. The Israelites had been in captivity in Babylon during a period of 70 years. Those years had been years of labor, sorrow, and regret. They had been carried away from their beloved homeland. In a strange country they had been held captive and had been treated as such. We can imagine what that meant; the hardships and sufferings that entailed.

But now they had been permitted to return. Their longing eyes had rested again upon the beloved hills and valleys of Judea. Their feet had trod once more upon the hallowed ground where Jerusalem, the beautiful city, had stood, with the temple, so sacred to them.

The Psalmist in considering this, and remembering their past captivity, bursts out in a song of joy. He says:

"We were as those who dream." They could not realize that it was really true, that this good fortune had come to them. He continues: "Then was *our* mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing." It was Jehovah's work and special blessing. Why, even the heathen acknowledged that and said: "The Lord hath done great things for them." And the Psalmist in behalf of his people repeats it and says: "Yes, the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

But in the midst of their great joy at the return to their own land, they must realize that the work, so mightily and graciously begun, was not yet completed; it was only a little beginning. Not all had yet returned; only a small percentage, a little vanguard, compared to the entire nation. For the return of the others these must yet yearn and pray; wherefore he says: *"Turn again* our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south."

The country south of Judea, toward the desert of Sinai, thirsts for rain, for water in its streams, which disappear in the summer through drouth, but return again in the winter. So the Psalmist longs and prays for the return of those who are still in Babylon.

Then, too, the work lay before them of bringing the country back to what it was before their departure. It had been a fertile country, rich in its fields of golden grain and its vineyards. Now those fields had long been untilled. Weeds and thorns grew where once the golden grain waved in the morning breeze and the vine tree had yielded its purple fruitage. The ground was, moreover, at the time of their return, parched from drouth. What hard toil was therefore in store for them! And even at that; with their most earnest labors, could they be sure that the ground in such a condition would yield anything worth while? Perhaps their labor would be all in vain. It would be indeed a *"sowing in tears."*

But the Lord had promised that everything would be restored; not only the people, but also the former rich harvests. Therefore the Psalmist sings so hopefully, so joy-

ously, so triumphantly: "They that sow in tears shall *reap in joy.*"

The city of Jerusalem and the temple were also to be rebuilt—another difficult task. But also in that undertaking they would be successful, through the grace and power of God.

Now, dear friends, permit me to apply the words of this psalm to our field here in St. Louis. The great majority of our people here have been in bondage, in captivity, under a much more tyrannical taskmaster than the Babylonian king, namely, the sinful world. For a long period they have been held thus enslaved. They are almost confirmed and established in such a condition. Yet, the Lord in His mercy has caused a few to *return out of that captivity,* to the *"land of promise,"* the Kingdom of God. And we are now *laboring* and *praying* and *yearning* for the return of the others. Are the fields here hard, and parched, and unyielding? Do weeds and thorns grow where the garden of the Lord should blossom? I need not answer that question; *you know the situation.* It has been for years, even from the beginning, a *"sowing in tears."*

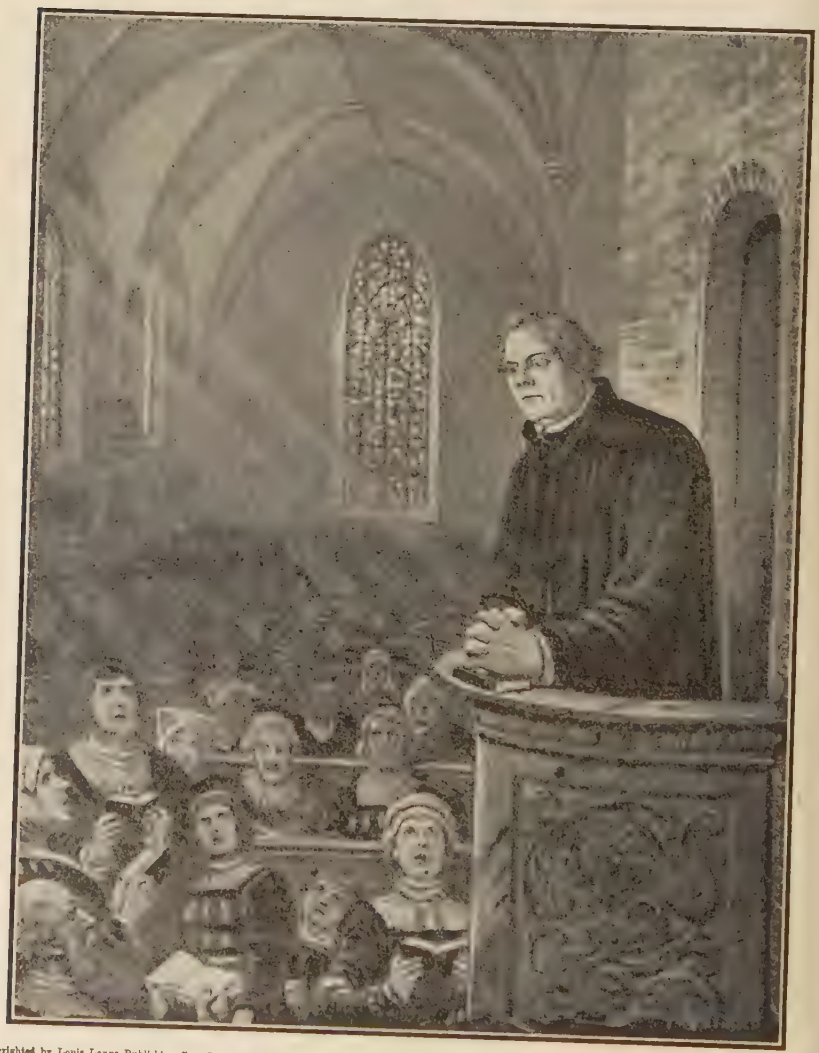
But, we ask, what will be the final result? What will the harvest be? Has the Lord forgotten us? Are His ears closed to our prayers? Is He no longer the Lord of harvests? Has His arm of might been vanquished? No! He is "the same yesterday, today, and forever."

We have also the promise of restoration: "Fear not, thou little flock, for it is the good and gracious will of God that ye shall inherit the Kingdom." Therefore we can say hopefully, nay, jubilantly and triumphantly: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

It may not be for us, personally. It may not come in our time of service here. But sooner or later *it will come.* And we are willing to *sow,* even if it is *"in tears,"* that *other laborers,* who will succeed us, may *"reap in joy."*

So, dear friends, continue the *sowing,* the *longing,* the *yearning,* the *praying*—and be this, then, my word of farewell to you tonight; these words from the 126th psalm:

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."



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"We all believe in one true God." Luther and his Congregation in the Town-church at Wittenberg, 1541.

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